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The Week

THE theory of the British Empire is at last catching up with the facts. The proposals of the Imperial Conference, if enacted into law as they undoubtedly will be, will go far toward formal recognition of the new condition of independence among the dominions. The report of the sub-committee in fact expressly concedes the "absolute equality" of the chief parts of the Empire (not including India, whose status was defined in the Government of India act of 1919). The Governor General of any dominion in the future will represent only the Crown and not the government of the United Kingdom. That phrase, incidentally, is to be abolished, at the insistence of Ireland, wherever it occurs, including the official title of the King. In the future, government will communicate directly with government in all cases. No law will be promulgated by Great Britain, affecting the self-governing dominions, without their consent. No Governor General will give advice to G[illegible]tain affecting the country where he is [illegible]ithout the consent of the dominion government. While the "last word" on foreign policy will still be given by London, the right of the dominions to conduct their own foreign affairs and to appoint diplomatic representatives is specifically recognized. The dominions "of course" assume no obligations under the Locarno agreements unless they wish to, as a majority do not.

AS WAS to be expected, the new formula is a compromise. It does not go so far as the Irish, and such bitter nationalists as General Hertzog of the Union of South Africa wished; yet it is radical enough to make old-fashioned Britishers with their contemptuous disregard for all Colonials feel that the world is indeed coming to an end. The fact that there is no written document for the Empire corresponding to the American Constitution makes it possible to effect changes of great importance easily and quickly once the necessity for them has been recognized. That is what has happened in this case. The self-governing dominions have for years shown an increasing and natural desire for the loosening of British apron-strings. While sentimental ties with England are still strong, politically and economically Canada, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand are steadily growing more self-sufficient. They cannot be held in the Empire by force; and it is therefore the part of wisdom to seek to strengthen the power of those invisible bonds which are sometimes the strongest of all. The device will doubtless serve for many more years; though in the end it must certainly give way to a more realistic grouping based on geographic and economic fact.

RELATIONS between the United States and Mexico are strained again—we are tempted to add, as usual. To our stock grievances of oil and land laws we now add the charge that Mexico is interfering, is in fact "spreading Bolshevism" in the Central American republics and particularly in Nicaragua. An accusation of interference with the last-named country, coming from the United States, would be funny if the matter were not so important. From 1912 to 1925 our government came about as near to dictating affairs in Nicaragua as it possibly could, short of open annexation. During these

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thirteen years we kept Marines there, and since they were withdrawn in 1925 they have twice been sent back. The new President of Nicaragua, Adolfo Diaz, is notoriously a tool of the Americans, put into power now as he has been before, by our influence. The reasons for our actions have been, first, the existence of the Panama Canal nearby; second, the possibility that we may some day wish to dig another canal through Nicaragua, a plan which has been brought up repeatedly during the past seventy-five years; third, the heavy investments in Nicaragua by Americans and particularly the loans by Wall Street bankers.

MEXICO replies to our charges that if the Nicaraguan Liberals (the revolutionists) have been aided from Mexican soil, it has been without the knowledge or consent of the Calles government. While we have no means of knowing whether this statement is correct, certainly the accusation that Mexico is "spreading Bolshevism" sounds like a cheap attempt to prejudice Americans, who can still be roused by that word to a state of fury which has no relation to the facts. But if Mexico *has* been interfering in Nicaragua, whose tactics has she been imitating?

THE New York World is doing a fine job in its efforts to obtain investigation by the state of South Carolina of the particularly horrible lynchings which recently took place at Aiken. As our readers will remember, the three Negroes who were taken from the jail by a mob and killed had been charged with a murder committed seventeen months earlier. They had all been tried once, and the State Supreme Court having reversed the decision, were in the process of being tried once more. Some light is thrown on the probability of their guilt by the fact that Judge Lanham, sitting in the second trial, had already directed a verdict of not guilty in the case of one of the three. When South Carolina showed a laggard spirit in the investigation of the lynching and the punishment of those guilty, the World took up the case, sent an able investigator, Mr. Oliver Garrett, to the scene, and single-handed forced the case into the centre of the limelight. Many protestations have been heard from various Carolinian editors and public officials that this constituted unwarranted interference with the state's private affairs; to all of which the answer is that without the World's "meddling" nothing was in prospect but a perfunctory investigation of the affair, whereas a real one now seems inevitable.

FORMER Secretary of Agriculture Edwin T. Meredith, who is one of the chief supporters of William G. McAdoo for the Democratic Presidential nomination, has still another variant of farm relief to offer. He is convinced, according to a report by the New York Times of a speech before the New York Chamber of Commerce, that the real problem is to eliminate the crop surplus, and he believes that the amount of production is determined by the height of the price. So far he talks like any conventional economist who opposes relief legislation on the ground that if the price goes low enough, production will be so reduced that the surplus will disappear. But his conclusion does not seem to fit on to his premises. He wants a commission, composed of three Cabinet officers and four other members to be appointed by the President, to fix prices for the six major crops. This will be done by declaring that the government will buy, at the price named, any surplus remaining after the end of the crop year. No farmer would therefore sell at a lower price, after accounting for interest and carrying charges. But, one may ask, what kind of prices is the commission to fix? If higher than the market would otherwise bring, the price would not destroy but enlarge the surplus; if lower, the whole device would be pointless and ineffective. Since Mr. Meredith comes from Iowa we judge the former plan is in his mind, and we await further light on what the government and the taxpayers are to do with a mounting stock of ever-growing crop surpluses, stimulated by the high prices paid for them out of the Treasury.

THOSE farmers' advocates who object to reclamation projects on the ground that the chief trouble with agriculture now is overproduction, and more tilled land ought not to be added in competition, ought to be relieved when they learn that of the $13,031,000,000 worth of farm products raised last year in this country, only $96,100,000 worth, or considerably less than 1 percent, were produced on government irrigated projects. They ought to be not merely relieved, but actively interested, when they learn of the Interior Department's approach to the problem of reclamation in the South, for a preliminary study of which Congress has authorized $100,000. According to a recent statement by Secretary Work, it is not the intention to clear vast areas of land, but to start a few demonstration colonies on projects so carefully worked out that there is little chance of their failure. Naturally this cannot mean adding to crop surpluses; on the contrary, it will probably mean withdrawing part of the farm population from the production of unmarketable surpluses to colonies so well placed and organized that they will furnish an example to others of how crops can be grown and marketed at a profit. Socially also the experiment will be desirable as a demonstration of how a farming community properly planned can maintain values of life that will keep the young people on the farm, just as Letchworth village in England is a prototype of better urban living which is attracting attention all over the world.

THE regional planners' doubts of the social and economic utility of th

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reached the stage of popular discussion in the newspapers with the statement of Thomas A. Edison attacking tall buildings. Of course they add so to traffic congestion and housing problems that they destroy social values and lead to inefficiency. The skyscraper has found a defender, however, in Harvey Wiley Corbett, a well known architect. It is Mr. Corbett's contention that the automobile is the cause of traffic congestion, and that the tall building adds "vertical transportation" to horizontal and thus economizes space. There would be some point in Mr. Corbett's remarks if those who travel vertically in the skyscraper did not have to travel horizontally to and from it. If he is to develop his idea logically, let him design a few buildings which contain not merely offices but dwelling places, stores, factories, farms and recreation parks, so that the complete cycle of life could take place on a vertical plane. Our own experiences with vertical transportation, however, lead us to prefer the automobile.

THE National Grange is well known as the most conservative of our farmers' organizations, with its main strength in the Republican Northeast. At its recent convention in Maine two resolutions were presented with regard to the disposition of Muscle Shoals, one advocating government ownership and operation, the other rental to a specific private corporation. Neither proposal could get a clear majority, and a compromise was finally passed advocating rental to the highest bidder under certain rigorous conditions. Congress, with the question of the disposal of Muscle Shoals up again, would do well to note that in the most conservative regions of the nation—the country districts of rock-ribbed Republicanism—there is enough sentiment for public ownership so that it lost by an extremely narrow margin. Farmers are rapidly being educated on the question of private monopoly of public utilities through their contact with power companies, which show such tremendous favoritism in this country to manufacturing industry. If they once become aroused as they did over the railroads, the electric utilities will not enjoy such easy going and fat pickings as they have for the past five years.

GEORGE BERNARD SHAW has been awarded the Nobel prize for literature, for the year 1925, and for once has done a banal thing. We do not refer to his remark that probably he got the award because he wrote not one word in 1925; or to his rejection of the $32,000 which went with the honor. These were both good Shavianism, and to be expected. But when he devotes the money to the propagation of better literary relations between Sweden and England, we are disappointed, not only because it is doubtful whether such expenditures are ever worth while, but because there are at least forty better ways to spend the money, and we should have expected G. B. S. to think of fully thirty-nine and probably forty-one of them. We hope Jove has but nodded, and is not settling down for a nap.

THE Pittsburgh Coal Company and other large bituminous operators which violated the Jacksonville agreement with the United Mine Workers of America and reduced wages to or below the 1917 scale have recently increased wages again, in some cases above the union rates specified in the agreement. The reason is obviously that the British coal strike and possibly other influences as well, have occasioned a great increase in the demand for American coal. Profit margins are large and ability to pay higher wages results. Also, the labor market is tighter and the employers must bid higher to obtain a sufficient number of capable workers. President Lewis of the miners' union attributes the increase to a failure to obtain adequate production from unskilled and underpaid non-union labor. It is difficult to foresee what will be the effect of this situation on the union's strength in the spring negotiations. If heavy demand and high wages continue, the union may have less attraction for the workers in non-union mines, but on the other hand the union mines will be more prosperous and there will be less prospect of a strike over a demand for wage reduction. But if the end of the British strike and diminished industrial demand lead to wage reductions again, the union may be forced to go out. In any case, the shoddy character of an industry which levies the losses of its wide fluctuations on the workers is revealed.

THE Soviet government in Russia has introduced compulsory military training for all young men. The New Republic, which has opposed this institution in America and in Western Europe, wishes to record its opposition to the procedure in Russia as well. We regard it as unjustified by the present international situation, as tending in itself to produce a chauvinistic spirit, and as being wholly in opposition to the alleged ideal of the Communists, the brotherhood of man.

Are School Teachers Citizens?

AT last the Board of Superintendents of the Department of Education of New York City has put into cold print what many teachers have long felt to be its reactionary attitude toward freedom of thought and utterance for teachers both in school and out. In justifying its refusal to promote Abraham Lefkowitz, an assistant teacher of history in the high schools, to head of department, the Board of Superintendents expressly charges him with undesirably radical activities outside of school. Here is the edict which Superintendent Mandel used this occasion to pronounce in the matter of teacher's rights:

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> A teacher may not have one set of opinions for the classroom and another for the public platform. As a school teacher, he has not the same rights as other citizens to print, publish or declare his thoughts and opinions. He is no longer at liberty to "freely write, speak or publish." This is not an interference with his rights as a citizen. His rights are as free and untrammeled as they were. He may at any time "emancipate himself from the shackles of the department and exercise his full rights as an American citizen" by resigning his position.
>
> In determining whether or not a teacher shall be promoted, the Board of Superintendents is obligated to take into account the history of the teacher, his public opinions, the persons with whom he associates, and his attitude toward governmental questions. To insist that public school teachers shall not commit the offenses charged against Mr. Lefkowitz is no interference with "intellectual freedom." We cannot concede that "intellectual freedom" is synonymous with "insolence" or "vulgarity" or with the right to sneer at our institutions.

Consider in connection with this manifesto some of the conditions which obtain in the schools today, especially in the relation between teacher and pupil. The teacher was formerly an authoritarian taskmaster who was engaged in whipping the primal sin out of his pupils' carcasses and thus training them to be law-abiding citizens. Latterly, Dewey, Montessori, Thorndyke and others discovered that even the ordinary pupil is a thinking animal, that he wants to know and do things, that he seeks standards, values and goals. The high school scholar in New York has an uncanny faculty of putting his teacher on the defensive. He will not learn unless he questions and is shown the reason why. Teachers cannot meet this pragmatic and rational turn of mind by a solemn assumption of pedagogical omniscience, by intolerance, ignorance, coercive discipline or ill-temper. They can meet it only by themselves assuming a questioning, searching, reasoning attitude and by exhibiting a reverent regard for truth.

The best pupils in the high school today are, consequently, almost invariably found in the classes of teachers who share this inquiring attitude. Such teachers will not blanch at discussing the debatable topics of the day. They will not burk honest questions. They will not dodge the spectres of injustice, or corruption. They will, while giving due praise to America's greatest men, discuss them as human beings instead of grandiose mummies. They will, finally, not even fear, if it is relevant to their subject, to talk about Socialism or Bolshevism or the oil scandal, or the flagrant faults of political parties, or the folly of armament or the dangers of militarism. The best testimony to the value of broad-mindedness of this type of teacher consists in the splendid confidence he inspires in his pupils and the increased zeal of the latter for their studies.

But this is true only of the exceptional teacher. How does the average instructor of history, of economics, of civics and of English react to the cross-questioning of his scholars? It must be said, regretfully, that he turns his back upon the problems of the day. He shuts his eyes. He plunges with a huge relief into the sacred abstractions of the textbook from which all heresies have long since been purged or which are perfumed to the taste of the chauvinist and the patrioteer. In them his soul is at peace. He is safe. He can say nothing dangerous or compromising.

For that is the sad and ineluctable truth. The spirit animating the teaching in the public schools in New York and elsewhere is unprogressive. The metropolitan schools in particular can boast of lavish equipment, of an annual budget of $110,000,000; they can point to a generous program for crippled, atypical and vocational pupils; they can plume themselves on having made real progress in the instruction of reading, geography and arithmetic; they have adapted themselves in these and many other respects to the vital needs of the pupils' health and environment. But there they stop. They dare not proceed beyond an ideal of efficiency in the mechanics of learning to a frankly experimental policy of correlating school and life for the individual student. They will not encourage the spirit of honest inquiry and initiative. They will not foster human-mindedness, or the innovating spirit of the creator and the poet.

The reasons are not far to seek. They are to be found, first, in the very hugeness of the educational enterprise—the school system. This "system" must teach in New York alone a million pupils and pay for 30,000 teachers. It will be the tendency of such a vast machine in the very nature of the case to produce a certain deadening standardization. In the very effort to operate it smoothly, the individuality of teacher and pupil is often crushed. A huge bureaucracy, which exists for administrative purposes alone and which is altogether out of contact with the pupil and the classroom, presides over this educational juggernaut. It includes various boards: a Board of Education, a Board of Superintendents, a Board of Examiners, district superintendents, supervisors of this, that and the other, directors, assistant directors, heads of departments, people in charge—an endless ramification of negative and checkmating officialdom, whose business it is to see that the teacher furnishes the public with its money's worth.

But worse than the effect of this "system" on the initiative of the teacher is the ideal of the community which pervades the administration of the schools. In the case of New York, certainly, and almost to an equal extent elsewhere it is the ideal of an uncritical, narrow-minded, ignorant and self-satisfied Americanism—an Americanism that proclaims that we are the salt of the earth; that we cannot do and never have done wrong; that our motives have always been piously altruistic; that we are the greatest, the freest, the best, the most noble people in the

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world. Far from "keeping the schools free from propaganda"—the war cry which the educational authorities use against so-called radical teachers—the pupils in the schools are daily subjected to the most insidious kind of propaganda—a propaganda which exploits for class purposes and in the interest of intellectual illiberality the generous patriotic emotions of youth. In so far as it is successful their minds are warped, and they tend to become hasty, gullible, suggestible, prejudiced, suspicious and ignorant human beings. They have received the worst possible training for responsible citizens to whom the welfare of the republic is subsequently to be intrusted. For they are trained to think and act not like the members of a progressive society, who, unless they are conscious of their activities, cannot know where they are going and cannot control their own future, but as the members of a herd who live sluggishly by routine most of the time and cannot move together unless they are stampeded.

In New York, the school superintendents merely act as conscious or unconscious purveyors of mob Americanism. They are usually men with "respectable" opinions, anxious to perpetuate the status quo, eager to please the Board of Education who themselves are of "respectable" opinions and to whom they owe their jobs. Hence the distress among the superintendents when any teacher, even after school hours, ventures to oppose in public the prevailing popular ideas. As the consequence of such a break they know that their own irreproachable rightness may be in question. They fear that their chances for promotion or even their retention of their jobs may be imperiled, for it is common knowledge that there is no position more precarious and more vulnerable to attack for political mistakes higher educational offices. It is only those Great Br[illegible] domiciled, [illegible]triotism shines out like a beacon to all the [illegible] may hold up their heads.

[illegible]op of this prevailing tendency to con[illegible] the latest and worst pronouncement [illegible] of Superintendents. Hereafter not [illegible]ers not declare their sentiments in classrooms, but they are also proscribed from freely "writing, speaking or publishing" them outside of school. As teachers "they have not the same rights as other citizens." At least one thing can be said for the superintendents: their candor ends all doubts that may have existed in teachers' minds as to their status, both intra- and extra-mural.

No doubt it is highly questionable whether the superintendents can legally prevent teachers from engaging in such lawful pursuits as they please after school hours. The Constitution, as the superintendents well know, guarantees to all the "rights of free speech, free press, and orderly assembly." On what pretext then can they rightly enjoin the teacher from "writing, speaking or publishing" his views on any question? He is protected from the discharge by his or her safeguard of permanent tenure issued only after a three-year probationary period in which he has had to prove his fitness both in ability and character. How can this protective barrier, for which teachers labored throughout years to erect, be hurdled? The wish of the superintendents is, perhaps, father to the thought.

Already, conditions in the schools, as regards intellectual independence, are bad enough. Warned by the examples of the war pacifists who were expelled by Doty squads and Lusk laws, by snoopery official or unofficial, the natural caution of teachers has bloomed into a strange and wondrous thing. With a few outstanding exceptions they are becoming the most tight-lipped and timorous creatures of any profession in the country. They have learned to keep their mouths shut and their minds empty. When they do talk, they talk as though dictaphones were hidden in the walls; they are on their guard; not a word falls from their lips that would not satisfy the most orthodox. Never did regimentation reap a more inglorious harvest; never did an enforced intellectual diet more fully starve out the natural courage of the human soul. The teacher will not fight; he has learned that only in surrender can he find peace. And even if he enters the system with an independent mind, he soon finds that the educational treadmill has done its work, and presently he too yields, and finds solace in inertia. The result is that today even the finest minds are clogged with apathy or, even worse, with contempt and disgust for their jobs.

And what will be the effect of this latest fiat of the superintendents upon a teacher morale already so vitiated? Even though the decree will never, for legal reasons, be enforceable, it will be a venturesome teacher indeed who will risk the disapproval of the superintendents. Such a teacher must abandon forever all prospects of promotion. The necessity for a complete renunciation of his right to communicate his conviction, of his dignity as a thinking human being and his privileges as a citizen, will be made more painfully apparent than it is even now. The dissenters and radicals, the men who will not be quiet, will no doubt fight bravely on, but at a tremendous personal sacrifice. For the presumption will be, in the case of such men and women, that mentally and morally there is something wrong with them; something criminal in their wish to appear on platforms "with extreme radicals" and Bolsheviks and such-like menaces to American civilization. And, worst of all, throughout the length and breadth of the system, peace and harmony will prevail—the peace of silence and the harmony of 30,000 tight-closed minds. There is such a thing as the lockstep; but a lockstep of 30,000 crustacea has yet to edify the republic.

Yet the school authorities continue to ask what has happened to the good old type of teacher, especially the male, whose absence in the schools they deplore. They well know that the teacher's prestige in the community has sunk very low. To most peo-

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ple he seems a kind of joyless, spineless and unimportant petty clerk, laughable when he pretends to dignity, pathetic in his narrowly idealistic unworldliness: a queer sport in the race of men: a sort of third sex. And still the superintendents, sighing for the virile schoolmaster of yesterday, lift up their voices in lamentation. They are frankly appalled. Every day male teachers fall from the ranks. There is hardly a man left in the elementary schools; in the high schools the women are already in the majority; and many of these leave upon marriage. Certainly the officials must see the inevitable outcome of their illiberal policy—the gradual withdrawal of such self-respecting teachers as are at present in the system, and the entrance of such newcomers as are willing to shackle themselves.

Perhaps enlightenment may still come. Perhaps the day is not far distant when the schools will cease their propaganda for a self-glorifying nationalism and bestow upon the profession of teaching its proper dignity and importance. When that day comes the supervisor will let the teacher alone, and judge him by the effect of his example and precept upon the pupil. But how will it come? Is there any chance that the new school of thought in pedagogy will aid in wrenching education from the grasp of the politician, the bureaucrat and the patrioteer? We doubt it. There has been enough educational theory in this country in the past quarter century to reform the schools a hundred times over. If any substantial change for the better is to come at all, it will come largely through an awakening conscience among the teachers themselves. They will have to assert their own independence. Mark Hopkins and a boy seated on a log, we are told, made a university: the teacher and the pupil make a school. That is why it is so important for teachers jealously to guard their rights, as in this instance, against the encroachments of the superintendents. For with them lies the one possibility of effective resistance and future improvement.

Political Prisoners in Europe

ON the day on which Queen Marie of Rumania landed in New York a meeting was held in Union Square "to protest against the brutal persecution of political prisoners by the Rumanian authorities." At the same time the Ukrainian and Hungarian students of Bloomfield Seminary, an institution for training young men from Europe for the ministry, sent a circular to the faculties and students of American colleges protesting against the reception of "the sovereign of the most backward and lawless country of Europe" as giving sanction to "the barbarous rule exerted by the Rumanian government against the so-called minorities of the present Kingdom of Rumania." The statement rehearses the well established facts that these unhappy people are without political rights, that Hungarians, Ukrainians, Russians and Bulgarians have been arrested, imprisoned under atrocious conditions, often tortured; and that in Bessarabia alone thousands of people have been shot on the pretext that they were Bolsheviks. If one hesitates to accept statements from such interested sources, there is the evidence of Henri Barbusse, whose book Les Bourreaux, reviewed in the New Republic of October 13, gives a terrible picture of the sufferings of political prisoners in eastern Europe, particularly in Rumania.

Besides Rumania there is Poland. In 1924 hundreds of political prisoners went on hunger strike in the prisons of Cracow, Lemberg and Lodz for the improvement of their condition. A group of eminent Frenchmen issued a statement in their behalf, with this closing sentence: "On behalf of humanity we protest vividly against such injustice and demand that these requests for the most elementary necessities be fulfilled." Among the signers were Romain Rolland, Pierre Hamp, Herriot, Painlevé, Paul Boncour and Léon Blum. Thereupon Stanislav Thugutt, chairman of a committee of the Polish Parliament for investigation of prison conditions, replied to M. Painlevé, denying the charge that the white terror prevailed in Poland, and promising that the committee would undertake a thorough examination of the condition of political prisoners and inform the public of the facts. For two years this committee worked, its members pledged to silence, and only in the present year did it report to Parliament. The conditions which it uncovered were worse than the French sympathizers dreamed.

On July 1, 1924, there were 1,476 political prisoners, of whom 1,115 had not been tried. Some of the latter had been in prison two or three years. Conditions in the prisons were outrageous, especially in the Prison of the Holy Cross, where the death rate was nearly 40 percent a year. Tortures of an unbelievable nature were inflicted on suspects to make them confess and implicate others. M. Thugutt declared the protest of the French humanitarians justified, and urged that conditions be remedied not for fear of a European scandal but because "we have the duty of decency toward ourselves." Yet although the committee was unanimous on most of its recommendations the Polish Parliament rejected them. Since that time reports indicate that conditions have grown worse. According to such reports, between April, 1925, and February, 1926, 11,000 persons were arrested on suspicion of Communism, and there are now 6,000 political prisoners, of whom only a few have been tried.

Besides Poland there is Hungary. There the Horthy government is ruthless in its suppression of freedom of speech and the press. Not only are Communists persecuted but liberals have been indicted under a law "for the More Efficient Protection of the Country's Interests." A leading journal, Velag, has been suppressed and its editor, Charles Feleky, imprisoned because of an article which did not meet the approval of government officials. And besides

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Hungary there is Italy, where critics of Mussolini are imprisoned as a matter of course, and where the German inhabitants of the Tyrol are constantly subjected to a tyranny which makes the Austrian rule in Italy before the unification seem almost benevolent. And there must be added Russia, where the Communists imprison socialists; and Germany, where the bourgeois government imprisons Communists. In Jugoslavia conditions approach those in Rumania, while Bulgaria seems recently to have surpassed all preceding high-water marks of the white terror.

The two chief causes of this return to mediæval intolerance are obviously the presence within the borders of these countries of active and discontented minorities, and the dread on the part of property-holding classes of Communism. In Poland, for example, the Ukrainians, White Russians, Jews, Germans and Lithuanians number over 11,000,000 out of 29,000,000, which the government claims. In districts covering more than half the area of the country the races which figure among the minorities are heavily in the majority. In Rumania are included Transylvania with 3,000,000 Hungarians and Germans, Bessarabia, Bukovina, and the Dobrudja, which have scarcely a trace of Rumanian population. In Italy the German minority in the Tyrol is small in comparison, but the methods employed in its suppression are none the less violent. The existence of these conquered peoples within the dominion of the conqueror gives excuse for the employment of military force. According to M. Barbusse the army is the chief instrument of persecution, the officers being given the despotic powers of martial law or, as recently in Hungary, organizing unofficially for purposes of assassination. The second cause of the White Terror, fear of Communism, had its chief exposition lately in Bulgaria. Today it is most active in Rumania and Poland, both of which countries hold in leash provinces whose natural gravitation is toward Russia. Against Communism the most effective weapon is the secret service, known in Poland as the Defensive, where it employs much of the personnel of the Tsarist Ochrana, and all of its methods of espionage, provocation and torture.

That this situation should be a subject of concern to the people of the United States scarcely needs argument. As a matter of historic tradition we have liked to think of political freedom as our peculiar gift to the world. We have repeatedly as a nation shown striking sympathy with the politically oppressed. Moreover, the United States has a large share of responsibility for the political arrangements which leave racial minorities at the mercy of their conquerors. Not only did the United States promise to Germany and to the world a peace in which no people should be bartered into servitude to the will of another, but her representatives at Paris took an active and, in some respects, a leading part in making those arrangements in detail which falsified in so many cases this solemn engagement. We excuse these acts of our representatives on the grounds of ignorance or vanity, but the results of them remain. The American government should be as much interested today in the fate of those who suffer in Europe from the abandonment and betrayal of our humane policies, as formerly in that of the Jews in Tsarist Russia. Public opinion in America should be as sensitive as that of France. The protest signed by eminent Frenchmen in regard to the Polish prisoners had at least the effect of arousing the Poles themselves to obtain the facts and give them to the world. We wish that we could expect to see public men in this country of the standing of Herriot and Painlevé lending their influence to this cause.

The situation of the prisoners can be alleviated in some cases by relief funds; and the suffering of their families diminished. The New Republic of September 8 contained an urgent appeal in behalf of the political prisoners of Hungary, signed by members of the International Committee for Political Prisoners, having its headquarters at 2 West Thirteenth Street, New York City. This organization includes in its program appeals to public opinion through the dissemination of information in regard to political prisoners, and the raising and distribution of relief funds. Although its executives are among those whom it is the fashion of speakers before the defense and security leagues to denounce as agents of Moscow, the first publication of this organization was a book consisting of letters from political prisoners in Russia, and an appeal to the Soviet government to mitigate this persecution. It is equally ready to work for the amelioration of conditions in other countries from which Communists are the chief sufferers. It is a sign in the United States of a feeling of responsibility for our behavior in Europe, and of an international conscience such as that represented in France by the Ligue des Droits de l'Homme. As such, and as an active and responsible agency for the relief of human suffering, it deserves support and encouragement.

Farm Relief—New Style

THE objections to the sort of proposal for farm relief advanced in the McNary-Haugen, Dickinson and Haugen bills have been mainly of two kinds—first that it would not work, second that if it did work it would be undesirable. A new plan has now arisen, fathered by Dr. Charles L. Stewart of the University of Illinois and sponsored by the National Grange, which in our opinion avoids objections of the first kind. Apparently it would work; and if it is made the basis of discussion we shall have the advantage of being able to talk about whether we want to accomplish the results aimed at.

It will be remembered that the proposals in question are designed to raise the price of products like wheat, of which we have an exportable surplus. It is argued that the American prices of such prod-

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ucts tend to fall to the level set by the world market, and that this puts the American farmers at a disadvantage because they must live and buy in a community where most prices are held above the world level by the protective tariff and similar devices. The Haugen remedy was to provide a fund wherewith to buy for export a sufficient quantity of the crops in question to raise the American price above the foreign price. The losses of this process —which of course would involve buying high and selling low—were to be assessed against the producers themselves by an "equalization fee." It was believed that the total fees collected would be smaller than the gain caused by the rise in price of the whole crop and thus the growers would benefit. Now most of the practical difficulties concerned the assessment and collection of this fee. Would the individual farmers really understand the relation of the fee to the higher prices? Would there not be a good deal of holding out? And above all, owing to the numerous grades and uses of even a single product, and the many hands through which it must pass, would the same persons receive the higher prices who paid the fee?

All these objections would be met by a straight export bonus, paid out of the Treasury and raised by taxation of some sort. Such a plan has two fatal obstacles—it is probably unconstitutional, and it would meet the usual opposition to subsidies. But there is an ingenious device of a similar kind which is reported to have been applied successfully in Germany and Sweden, and might be adjudged constitutional. This is called the export debenture. For each bushel of wheat exported, let us say, the government would give the exporter a debenture with a face value of 32 cents. This debenture would be accepted by the customs officials at its face value in payment of import duties on any commodity. It would of course be transferable. The exporter would therefore be able to sell it, at a small discount, to importers. The effect would be that of a bonus on every bushel of wheat exported, which would maintain a higher level of wheat prices in the United States than abroad.

The effect on the Treasury would be felt through a diminution of the yield from import duties. This would tend to lay the burden of the export bonus on some other form of taxation. But the proponents of the measure argue that the protection now afforded to industry has precisely the same effect, since a protective tariff does not yield as much as would a lower tariff which would admit more imports. The question remains whether it is good public policy to stimulate agriculture as manufacturing is now stimulated.

It is pointed out by the advocates of the plan that it can be successfully applied not only on articles like wheat, on which a tariff already exists, but on cotton, which is on the free list. It would be possible, they claim, to differentiate domestic from imported cotton so that the latter would not be re-exported merely to gain the advantage of the bonus.

Of course there is a distinct limit to the amount of export debentures which could be issued. This limit is fixed by the total of import duties received. As a matter of practice, in order to keep the debentures from selling at much of a discount, it would be well to keep their total at not much over a third of the import duty yield.

If the plan led to a much enlarged production of the crops aided, it would naturally defeat itself, since exports would increase beyond the point where debentures would add much to the price. It has always been claimed by the farm-relief advocates that the higher price would not materially encourage production. This is doubtful, but still the plan might be used as an emergency measure while crop restriction was being worked out.

There would of course be a good deal of political pressure in fixing the amount of the bonus on specified products, as there is now in fixing tariff duties. And if the plan were adopted for emergency purposes, and were successful, it would be extremely difficult to get rid of it when the emergency had passed, just as it has been difficult to get rid of tariffs adopted to protect infant industries.

If, however, American agriculture is at a fundamental disadvantage as compared with manufacture, and if we wish to encourage agriculture at some cost to other industries, here is one way to go at it. Like protection it constitutes an interference with the process of free exchange of commodities which allows the nation to profit by the most efficient production, wherever it may be carried on. In our opinion it can find real justification only for two purposes—either to maintain domestic agriculture for some non-economic good such as national defense through self-sufficiency and the social values of rural life, or to mitigate, in a period of agricultural readjustment, the sufferings incident to change. We sincerely hope that it will not obscure the more fundamental task of enabling agriculture to operate so efficiently that it will be able to overcome whatever competitive disadvantages it may be suffering.

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Will England Restrict Foreign Investments?

THE period of autumn pressure, when Europe is a seasonal debtor to America, has come round for the second time since Great Britain restored her gold standard. It finds her with depleted resources after half-a-year's coal strike, yet gaily lending almost as usual to smarten up the emporiums of her trade rivals—Tokyo, Hamburg or wherever it may be. At the same time—since every day brings even the coal strike a day nearer its end—we all nourish a hope that eventually a trade revival may come her way at last. It is a time, therefore, to look round and measure the prospects.

If the British population is to be employed, though not at full stretch, yet reasonably well, we must hope for an increase of the national productive activity by, say, 10 percent. For this we shall require an additional working capital of perhaps $500,000,000, some part of which will be spent abroad in purchasing raw materials and most of which will have to be found through the intermediary of the banking system. This sum is not beyond the capacity of our current savings over six months, if the surplus is available, beyond what is required to finance normal capital improvements at home. But if the banks are to find the real resources which industry will need without resorting to inflationary methods, the new savings of the public must be drawn into their hands in exchange for other assets—such as stock exchange investments now owned by the banks, undigested new issues financed by the banks, overdrafts by corporations and the like which can be repaid out of the proceeds of the issue of public loans. Thus the resources to finance a revival of trade must be mainly found through the diversion of the current savings of the public into these channels, instead of into new foreign issues of the type now popular. The ability of the British joint stock banks to finance this revival will also be conditioned by the policy of the Bank of England. It is essential that the latter should not be restricting the basis of credit, and if prudently possible, should be slightly expanding it.

Great Britain may jeopardize her revival, therefore, if she allows her not very abundant flow of new savings to be drained away into foreign loans, and, generally speaking, if she allows the balance of current international indebtedness to tend against her rather than for her, with the result of pushing the Bank of England, not only towards dear money, but to a restriction of the volume of credit. If this happens, there will be no revival of British trade. It is one of the fatal traps latent in the gold standard that one of the easiest methods of protecting it at any given moment consists in checking trade. Traders and manufacturers spend their working capital some months, on the average, before they recoup themselves out of the proceeds of sales. To prevent them from spending is, therefore, an efficient temporary expedient for diminishing her international indebtedness and thereby retaining her gold.

Experience shows that a policy of laissez-faire in these matters means taking no action until the mischief has been done and then allowing the so-called "natural forces" thereby generated to administer a sharp rebuff to all enterprising persons. Let us, therefore, examine the present prospects for Great Britain's international cash account and for the sterling exchange, with a view to seeing whether it is safe to permit matters to take their own course.

For the first nine months of 1926 the excess of imports over total exports has been $215,000,000 greater than for the same period of 1925—almost the whole ($210,000,000) of this deterioration having occurred in the last two months of the period, August and September. Since the published trade returns reflect business activity some little time in arrears, the deterioration is certain to continue during the last quarter of 1926, whether the coal strike is settled or not, and will probably reach or exceed $375,000,000 by the end of the year. Furthermore, new foreign issues during the first nine months of the year have been $155,000,000 more than in 1925, during the greater part of which year the embargo on such issues was still in force. Thus she is already $395,000,000 down on the two visible items of trade and new investment taken together. A comparison with the figures for 1924 yields practically the same result.

What is the effect of these changes on her ability to invest abroad? The Board of Trade has compiled an estimate of the invisible items in her favor in 1924 and 1925. It is possible, in my opinion, that this is an underestimate. To avoid undue pessimism, therefore, let us increase the official estimate of her miscellaneous financial and trading profits by $300,000,000 per annum—which is probably a full or an excessive allowance. On this assumption and taking the invisible items at the same rate per annum in 1926 as 1925, the British international balance sheet for the last three years works out as follows:

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	(In millions of dollars) 1924	1925	1926 Jan.-Sept.	1926 Oct.-Dec.*
Net favorable balance of "invisible" items	$2,235	$2,370	$1,775	$595
Excess of "visible" imports over exports	1,620	1,930	1,585	700
Balance available for foreign investment	615	440	100	—105
Actual foreign issues on the London market	670	990	360	

*Forecast.

This table indicates that at present Great Britain has no surplus for foreign investment and that she must be providing for a part of her recent loans by re-borrowing in the form of temporary balances and bills held by foreign banks in London.

Are there any favorable influences to modify this conclusion? Some there certainly are. Shipping earnings have increased in recent months. Government receipts from reparations and interest on allied debt are a little larger. The restoration of the gold standard has probably increased British profits from international banking business. On the other hand, for the fact that some of the leading imports are relatively cheap—especially cotton, but also sugar, wheat and maize—I have tried to allow in my forecast of the excess of imports during the last quarter of the year. Moreover, Great Britain is no longer receiving abnormal profits on the sale of rubber—a very large item not long ago. Taking all into account and remembering that she has added $300,000,000 per annum to the official estimate of her invisible earnings in order to correct a possible underestimate of this item, no one, surely, can maintain that the British surplus for foreign investment in 1926 as a whole will exceed $250,000,000 at the best, a figure which the actual issues on the London Market have already exceeded, or can deny a risk of its sinking towards zero.

The awkwardness of this for her future prospects is aggravated by the circumstances that the effect of foreign issues is generally delayed, some part of the proceeds being at first deposited with London banks or invested in sterling bills. The growth of London's international banking business also adds to the risks, since it may cause a greater proportion of the autumn pressure of European indebtedness to America to fall on London than has been the case lately. Against this, however, she can probably reckon on the United States Federal Reserve Board doing what it can to ease her seasonal difficulties, and on its refraining from embarrassing her by raising the Federal Reserve discount rates, unless the internal situation in America urgently requires this, of which there seems no sign, but quite the contrary, at present.

Taking all the features of this complex situation into account, is it sensible to allow foreign investment to proceed unhindered? The austere philosophers of laissez-faire reply that, if she lends too much, this will bring its own remedy in due course. Certainly. But the remedy will take the form of a reduction in the basis of credit, which will check indiscriminately foreign lending and home business. If this remedy has to be taken, the trade revival she hopes for will not happen.

The orthodox doctrine of leaving foreign investment to take care of itself reposes on the assumption that if it is in the least degree more profitable or less troublesome to the individual to lend his money to Tokyo than to finance the employment of labor in the North of England, then the former is preferable, whilst if practiced to excess it will "bring its own remedy." These notions purport to be very wise and intellectual. They accord with the repopularized motto of leaving everything to the resultant of individual business men acting each on his own and for himself "without interference from government." They are obsolete and dangerous, all the same. I did not criticize the embargo on foreign investment which preceded and accompanied the restoration of the gold standard. I did not believe that this restoration would obviate the use of the embargo in future. I think that a certain control of the volume of foreign investment is a permanent necessity for Great Britain, just as much as a rational bank rate policy. Meanwhile I should like to see the embargo reimposed at once.

The embargo is not a perfect instrument and might be much improved. It is not entirely fair and it is not entirely effective. But it is broadly efficient on the whole in attaining the desired end of checking new foreign investment by the great body of ordinary investors. We ought to devise a permanent centralized control for the regulation of foreign investment. An interesting pamphlet on Australian loans, lately published by Mr. Russell Cooke and Mr. Davenport, shows how badly the Trustee acts are working in regard to Dominion issues. We need a regular official plan for the control and rationing of this and other foreign investment business. Meanwhile the embargo, though crude, is the best instrument we have.

My argument, put shortly, is this. A trade revival at home will require real resources on the one hand and an undiminished basis of money credit from the banking system on the other hand. But, unless Great Britain can strengthen her international balance sheet, she is in danger of temporarily running short of the former and of putting the Bank of England in a position where the desire to protect its gold will cause it to restrict the latter. By checking foreign investment immediately she can

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lessen both dangers. Moreover, if this is done, the Bank of England can feel sufficiently confident about the underlying solvency of the position to allow its gold to flow out for the time being and even to use its American credits if necessary, without these movements being allowed to impair the reserves of the joint stock banks.

Is it wrong to exercise foresight? Does the individual subscriber to a Tokyo loan in response to large-scale newspaper advertisement consider the possible reactions of his investment on employment in the North of England three months hence with such care and understanding that those at the centre, the Treasury and the Bank of England, are absolved from the duty of taking thought? I suggest that this is not a case where the irresponsible actions of individuals are best left alone to produce what consequences they will.

J. M. KEYNES.

London.

Elinor Wylie

Intricate and Crystal

THIS high-spirited girl, who moves, for my mind's eye, in the stiff brocaded folds of an Infanta, was, as the old English saying goes, born with a silver spoon in her mouth, in a world that Henry James, Edith Wharton and Amy Lowell could understand and picture. At one and twenty, having been married still earlier, she threw the spoon on the floor and decided to be an Enchanting Companion. To speak truth, she and her sister and brother, her real intimates, in her Washington childhood, had always questioned the feel of cold silver in their mouths, and teased their brains with poetry. So off went Elinor to live in England, in the New Forest, with the fawns and the deer —another Jennifer Lorn intrigued by another Honorable and haughty and cultivated Gerald Poynard. But the deer of the forest are haughty creatures, too, though they seem so innocent. There is a look in the bland, touching eyes of fawns, especially, that drives a creature hysterical with longings that are not fed by sheltering beech leaves, lamplit evenings of love, and ancient books.

So, in due course, the witch returned to her native land.

> Now why should I, who walk alone,
> Who am ironical and proud,
> Turn when a woman casts a stone
> At a beggar in a shroud?

The Maine coast, which she had always loved, was her favorite haven. There, being after all unhappy, rather lonely and unoccupied, wandering one day about the house, she saw the gleam of a slender silver object in the corner of a deserted room. It was a PEN. She recognized it because she had tried it first in her early youth, picked it up in the New Forest, and thrown it down in a quick despair —one of those fits of wilful self-distrust which the men who have loved her have made it their business to soothe and beguile. She liked its slim, elongated shape, exclaimed with horror over its tarnished surface, and polished it tenderly to the metallic sheen that she exacts of all the objects that surround her.

So, in a humble room, wainscoted in yellow pine and over a grocery store, Elinor Wylie ceased to be an Enchanting Companion and began to write poetry, a lonely art. The beat of the northern winter sea was in her ears. Little lost islands, cedar-grown and wave-washed, swam before her eyes. "She began, very softly, to sing the lament for Flodden; her extreme happiness made her voice more than ever mournful and forlorn." Poor Jenny Forlorn, we shall not be too sorry for her, since she was at last finding her real self. The poetry, like the pen, had a gem-like gleam, recalling Amy Lowell's. It had a cadence and a form and a content reminiscent of another lonely woman, who by dint of asking God unanswerable questions, produced great epigrammatic poetry in an Amherst garden. Some of Elinor Wylie's questions must have been answered, for, as she sat there, lost and writing, the pretty curves returned to her discontented lips and the gleam of merry malice to her childish eyes.

In due course, again—for I must abridge this semi-symbolic tale — she left Washington "for good," yes, surely for good: conventional society was not her real home. She took a room in University Place, like any other struggling young writer who wonders where she will get the money to pay her landlord. But she arranged there—to the amazement of the clever young gentlemen who forthwith came clamoring to take her out to dinner—a series of fashionable drawing-room chairs, straight out of Edith Wharton and Henry James again, most resistant to lounging literary backs, though so exactly suited to her own straight, unyielding elegance; and in addition embellished her surroundings with certain luxurious and grandiose objects that amazed the Bohemian eye. There was a "flower piece," that, though bought in a junk shop on Madison Avenue, might have graced her mother's drawing-room in its most official days. There was a very elaborate silver mirror of the same period, swung on a silver standard (for she is a "Prinkin' Leddie," and rubs rouge on her palms as she talks). There were old books in choice bindings. And the young woman whom you saw in the

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midst of this crystal disharmony still wore the same silver dresses, with the same worldly elegance. But there was a difference. For Elinor Wylie for the first time in her life was free.

"Her influence over the prince's mind was a constant source of wonder to the girl, who had invariably played the part of feathered shuttlecock to the obstinacy of others. Her husband had always appeared completely unmoved and imperturbable; she marveled incessantly to behold her curious power in regard to the temperamental Abbas—" After all, you see, she was not continuously, could not be, a Lonely Poet. The Enchanting Companion tracked her down; the Young Lady of Fashion reappeared, with her tastes and requisitions, and even her pruderies; the Collector of objets d'art et de luxe confronted her like a ghost. Ancient selves (not so very ancient), ancient conventionalities, were her Lares and Penates, and she was writing for Vanity Fair under a frivolous name. Courage she had never lacked, and while she was finishing her first and most exuberant novel, and, as usual, keeping her bureau drawers and her fine frocks in perfect order, she was marrying for the third time —taking to herself a faithful and affectionate literary husband, who belonged rather oddly, to the world of her dead brother, and yet lived in the very centre of literary New York.

Discovering the world of fiction, as distinguished from the world of society, the world of romantic and cynical adventure, the world of hard payments, the world of lonely poetry, Elinor Benét, once Wylie, née Hoyt, hurled herself headlong into it, and became still another Elinor, whom I think of as a Lady in a Dream. If you observe her tossing off a highball in the small hours with the Algonquins, you will think her perhaps just the latest celebrity. Her popularity is a toy that she thoroughly enjoys playing with, for she has, has always had, as The Venetian Glass Nephew tells us plainly, the gift of play. She has put aside her conventions as unsuited to her environment, for she has "never liked to hurt people's feelings"—as she would say. But she leans on a simple and selfless devotion, and really lives only when she is shut up for the day in an empty room with her Lares to which have been added a few eighteenth century bird prints, a solid Benét comfort or two, a typewriter and a can of Campbell's soup. She may still indulge herself in a great state of pique, but she never lets it—indeed never did, since she sees herself so clearly—interfere with her heavenly flight with her dear Shelley across the United States of 1822. Now there, if you ask me, in this ideal figment, this figure of the Orphan Angel, is the man she really loves, as Amy Lowell loved Keats. Have you noticed how careful Elinor Wylie is to protect him from the other ladies, those who live not as she, in a dream but desirously? Not once, between the Atlantic and the Pacific, is this lover of women permitted to receive or to give so much as a kiss. Even Anne, the debonair white daughter of the red Indian chief, who might be another Elinor, is permitted only to touch the tips of his moccasins with her lips.

> Better to see your cheek grown sallow
> And your hair grown grey, so soon, so soon,
> Than to forget to hallo, hallo,
> After the milk-white hounds of the moon.

Charming poetry, and sincere, but not to be taken literally. Elinor Wylie can look, on occasion, a harrowed woman who has known tragedy. She can be tender to the under dogs and chivalrous to the unsuccessful, like that lost brother of her youth who felt life too deeply to bear its tragedy as she does, with a smile and a touch of rouge. Her cheek is never anything but rosy, and I can imagine the storms that would arise below Fourteenth Street if a single white hair were espied in those tawny locks which are always bobbed and waved as for the ball of a débutante. How often and how exquisitely has she described herself:

> But you have a proud face
> Which the world cannot harm,
> You have turned pain to a grace
> And the scorn to a charm.
>
> You have taken the arrows and stings
> Which prick and bruise
> And fashioned them into wings
> For the heels of your shoes.
>
> What has it done, this world,
> With hard finger-tips,
> But sweetly chiseled and curled
> Your inscrutable lips.

Elinor Wylie walks with the firm elastic tread of one who knows she has a blooded charger in the stable of her mind (he is shod in silver) to ride afield at will. Sometimes the animal chafes at the bit, tosses foam to the stars. But once astride him, she is master of him, and mastering, their blood runs fast and furious, as they together leap insurmountable obstacles with an extraordinary skill and virtuosity. The woman is, as the French say, still young, and has produced, in a very short time, and under pressures none too easy to adjust, two volumes of poetry which placed her at once among the most sensitive, poignant and accomplished of the American poets of the day, and three novels—poet's novels, all three, especially the last, The Orphan Angel—expert in their craftsmanship and mature and delicious in their own extravagant and artificial vein. Elinor Wylie has always been conspicuous; that is her nature, but the most conspicuous act of her life was to emerge, with no period of fumbling or apparent preparation, full-fledged. Like Athena, she seems to have sprung in her "black armor" from the head of a god.

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Was it life's enrichments, or life's deprivations that tempted the pleasure-loving, the spoiled, the delicate, the brittle, the elusive Infanta, insolent and elfin as a child, to live alone with a typewriter in an empty room?

Down to the Puritan marrow of my bones
There's something in this richness that I hate.
I love the look, austere, immaculate,
Of landscapes drawn in pearly monotones.
There's something in my very blood that owns
Bare hills, cold silver on a sky of slate,
A thread of water, churned to milky spate
Streaming through slanted pastures fenced with stones.

That "Puritan marrow" is real; I am reminded again of those Puritans of an older day, Henry James, Amy Lowell, with whom she belongs in spirit, if not in generation, who forced a cultivated power into the strait, strict field of art. How different the cool, dove-colored, icicle-pointed battles of her mind from the realistic earthy struggles of a Dreiser; from the tense emotional wrestlings of a Eugene O'Neill. Yet the Puritan brain is no easy antagonist:

My body is weary to death of my mischievous brain—

And again:

It is my thoughts that color
My soul that slips between;
Thoughts lunar and solar
And gold and sea-green

Tint the pure translucence
Of the crystal thread;
A rainbow nuisance
It runs through my head.

Could anything be more exquisitely devised than a Venetian Glass Nephew fabricated by Casanova to release a quicksilver soul from lunar and solar thoughts?

From shackles frailer
Than the wind-spun sea.

Yet here is a poem that seems to sum up, with Yankee vigor and an eighteenth century clarity, that reminds one of Zélide, the ultimate Elinor Wylie, marrowed by the Puritans and twisted by the cynics:

Now let no charitable hope
Confuse my mind with images
Of eagle and of antelope:
I am in nature none of these.

I was, being human, born alone;
I am, being woman, hard beset;
I live by squeezing from a stone
The little nourishment I get.

In masks outrageous and austere
The years go by in single file;
But none has merited my fear,
And none has quite escaped my smile.

That last line suggests a favorite quotation of Elinor Wylie's—it was said of Thomas Love Peacock—"He likes the flavor of an imperfect world and the preposterousness of peccant humanity." No wonder her books are delightful to Max Beerbohm. The urbane, ironic tone of Jennifer Lorn, which does not demand that the world be perfect, but only that it be diverting to the cool and laughing mind; the conceit of the Venetian Glass Nephew, these are similar to his own tone and conceit. Yet behind the mind in Elinor Wylie I catch a glimpse of

. . . a weeping creature
In a glass-walled cave.

In The Venetian Glass Nephew the sound of weeping is more audible to me than in Jennifer, and I am not surprised that the porcelain lady breaks her china bonds and with a cry of very human high spirits dashes off across the continent, tenderly companioning a poet whom she has adored since childhood. There is more of warmth in The Orphan Angel than in the earlier books, but it is still the warmth of a cold stream in the sparkle of noon. Perhaps it is because I have stood on the self-same mountain height that I love this passage about the traversing of the Sangre de Cristos: "Shiloh was like a blue-eyed eagle as he stared into the sun. Some transformation of glory was performed within his own mind, so that its actual convolutions came to hold the meaning of the crystal universe and to exalt it into a clear, abstract perfection of language; there are those who would sell their souls into darkness for a knowledge of the syllables which flowed like a stream of snow-water through Shiloh's mind."

The bird Imagination
That flies so far, that dies so soon

—he is Elinor Wylie's darling. He perches, like a bright-winged parrakeet, on her slender wrist.

Yet I remember the poem called Beware! in which "Baba, Playing a Nocturne by Chopin," is enjoined not to drown in sorrow:

Baba flourishes and dips,
Little gestures poise and gleam;
Now her shiny finger-tips
Strike the surface of the stream.

Now she plunges both her wrists
In the water blue as air,
Curdling into starry mists,
Diapered with light despair.

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Deep above the drowning sands
Sorrow like a moon is drowned;
Baba, only dip your hands
In the surface of the sound.

Will the Lady in a Dream, who is the novelist of airy reconstructions, break one day the shiny mirror which she holds between herself and the world and, as she promised in another poem called Valentine, in her most perfect first volume, eat her own honey-sweet heart? Elinor Wylie's dream-face is strange in its cold, silvery detachment, when seen across a room, yet so fresh and so brilliant, so childishly hard-hearted and friendly when she talks of her gambols with curling lips, who can say what it promises, what it withholds? All artists have a right to their limitations, for their limitations shape their art.

ELIZABETH SHEPLEY SERGEANT.

(Editor's note: This is one of a series of articles in which Miss Sergeant is discussing interesting contemporary Americans.)

The Hall-Press-Mills Case

THEY are wrong, to be sure, when they call it the Crime of the Century. Which Century? Looking backward, have they forgotten Harry's Evelyn? And looking forward, is it not reasonable to suppose that some time after February 17, 1957, the wife of the President of the United States will be found dead in the Blue Room accompanied by the corpse of the Spanish Ambassador, while the President, whose Great Seal was used to crush the Ambassador's skull, will be resuscitated to stand trial after having sought to take his own life by a hearty draught of mercurochrome?

If it is not the Crime of the Century, it is certainly the Crime of the Half-Decade; and the press has made it so. Not only did journals yellow and journals white wallow in it when it first broke (and spattered), until suffocated readers might well have protested against this yellow peril, this white terror; not only did a single paper, half size at that, reach into New Jersey from across a river and like an infant Hercules reopen Pandora's box so that Anteus might rise again (good tabloid mythology); not only has the case been tried in the newspapers even more casually and irresponsibly than in Somerville, no mean achievement, but a whole row of records has toppled like dominoes, as journalism, the sentinel of the palladium, has got seriously down to the business of telling the world from day to day that nothing important has developed. I summarize from the ever veracious columns of the Editor and Publisher and the equally authentic New York Times:

Five million words were written and sent from Somerville in the first eleven days of Round II. More than two hundred newspaper men and women are interned in that village for the duration. On the first day, 130,175 words were telegraphed in eight consecutive crowded hours. Twenty-eight Western Union operators are in the front line, accompanying the largest portable telegraph switchboard in the world, one into which you can jack 180 wires at once, if you want to, as of course you do. In the basement of the courthouse are sixty leased wires, at the other end of which dangle 60,000,000 people; on the third floor is an electric sending typewriter, which animates heaven knows how many of its kind in newspaper offices far and farther.

Eight daily papers, you will be fascinated to learn, have leased houses for the use of their Somerville staffs . . . The New York Daily News has sixteen men on the job, the Daily Mirror thirteen. . . . The hotels are putting four or five men in a room and extracting stiff prices from each. . . . Thirteen reporters have bought overcoats in Somerville, which sets you wondering where on earth their home towns can be. . . . Two motorcycles are used to rush photographs from the Court to the nearest rapid transit station. . . . Ten photographers are allowed in the courtroom, but they must remain along the walls. . . . Mary Roberts Rinehart, Billy Sunday and Dorothy Dix are among the famous persons reporting the trial. . . . The Rev. John Roach Straton writes a daily editorial about it, in which he disapproves of sin. . . . Mrs. Henry Stevens, wife of one of the defendants, is covering the case and by asserting her husband's innocence earns funds with which to prove him so. . . . James Mills, husband of the murdered choir singer, is also a reporter now, all equipped with pencil and paper. . . . So is his youthful daughter Charlotte, who has grown up under the benign eye of the news reel camera. On a day of the trial Charlotte testified extensively and also wrote 10,000 words of excellent journalese which appeared under her signature next morning and evening. . . . The writing alone would be quite an achievement for three facile men. . . . The crowd which is in town for the trial has attracted a flock of bootleggers. . . . Gambling games have been set up. . . . New York panhandlers have moved to Jersey temporarily and ply their art among the crowds who stand without the courthouse wishing they were within.

It is impossible to contemplate such a spectacle without asking: Does the press create the public interest? Or the egg the hen? To some extent, of course, both. The editors, perceiving a case which looks to them like a good standard murder mystery, began by dressing it up attractively in the effort to sell it to their readers. In all such instances they send out reporters who have read plenty of detective fiction and know what is expected. They write what is in effect a serial mystery novel, using real names and places as tags for their quite fictitious characters. The public responds; it buys and reads. Thereupon the editors observe: "We gotta give the people what they want," and make their stories longer and stranger. This is called a Vicious Circle and gets itself spoken of harshly by teachers of journalism, Capital J, in colleges.

Speaking in a disinterested capacity as one who is bored sick by the Hall-Mills case, I am bound to add that it does have at least four other values which attract the public interest, beyond the great attribute that it is still

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unsolved and can be picked at like a wire-nail puzzle. First of these is the enigmatic central figure, Mrs. Hall. Is she a stone image, concealing guilt behind the most perfect poker face since the man in the iron mask? Can one middle-aged widow of a small town pastor outbluff the state of New Jersey (easy) the sharp wits of tabloidia (harder) and even (climax) the neighbors?

And again, did wealth buy immunity four years ago? Is Jersey justice like Jersey lightning, greased?

Further, the case is quadrupled in viscosity because the bad actor was a clergyman. How the general population yearns to see a gentleman of the cloth stub his toe! And how discouragingly seldom does he oblige!

But most important of all, I think, is the widespread feeling that the case has taken the lid off a fairly typical respectable American town. Who doesn't want to know how his neighbors really misbehave? Well, here's how! Half of New Brunswick seems to have been in De Russey's lane that night; and for no purpose it would care to have written out on the church bulletin board. Is there any reason to believe New Brunswick in 1922 was better or worse than any other town in 1926? None. Can you imagine that on Sept. 14, 1922, a Dionysiac wave, unprecedented and unrepeated, struck this one community? The general population certainly doesn't believe any such a thing.

It believes there are ten thousand De Russey's Lanes; that the pathetic missives between the enamored cleric and his love could be duplicated in every mail sack which Uncle Sam tosses from train to truck. If you could listen at all keyholes at once, how many whispered conversations would you not hear, of illicit passion, soda pop, and "such delicious" eclairs? . . . No; the New Brunswick affair merely enlarges the public ear already cocked toward murmurs of this strange-familiar sort; it takes the lid off the private life of all the common lot of us. If, as we strain our eyes to see beneath this lid, there is something of a leer about our countenances—well, the leer, too, is a part of the expression of mankind.

BRUCE BLIVEN.

Dead Morning

When sleep, the supposed guardian,
That had its hands upon my eyes,
Dissolved in moistened light and ran
Among the grasses, water-wise,
I saw above my head a sun
And near me, in a breathless oak,
Two bitter crows and on a stone
A third, wing-deep in silver smoke.
I suddenly knew that this was death
And burial in bodiless air,
And that I should not feel your breath
Against my throat, nor have your hair
Pile at my cheek its sea-sweet smell,
Nor have your body's dolphin length
Balance its curve against my strength.
I knew that I had waked in hell.

RAYMOND HOLDEN.

Washington Notes

WOULDN'T it be the funniest thing in the world if poor dear old Mr. Mellon after six long happy years should during this silly little session of Congress fall off the tall pedestal upon which the banking and business interests have so carefully placed him? It will not happen of course, but it is a fact that in the past few days there have been some evidences of unstable footing upon the part of the old gentleman and for the first time a disposition shown upon the part of his worshipers throughout the country to question the infallibility of his wisdom and judgment. It is undoubtedly due to the dazed condition in which Mr. Coolidge's tax refund proposal left him. Those whose business it is to keep in closest touch with the Treasury Department report that the old gentleman for days following the breaking of the news to him was not only dazed but positively dizzy. So puzzled was his state of mind that, losing all regard for the consistency of his record, he permitted himself to be placed in the position of abandoning his own previously and emphatically expressed ideas as to the proper disposition of a surplus such as has accumulated and swung undignifiedly into line with the purely political gesture for tax refund or credit made by the canny Calvin—Amherst-inspired—taking care only—Winston-guided—to modify the Coolidge suggestion so as to bring it within the realms of reason.

The amusing part of the whole incident is the shock sustained by some of our leading bankers and publishers over the discovery that Mr. Mellon, of all men, could be brought to mold and modify his financial views to meet political considerations. It will, however, take more than one incident of this sort to shatter a confidence so firmly founded and by the time this piece appears in print the solemn and silent dignity in which both the President and his Secretary of the Treasury are so deeply shrouded will have again absorbed the little evidences of small politics which have marked them both these chill November days before the opening of Congress. By the time the bell rings they will both have trued up and resumed the holy, non-partisan, non-political aspect that so endears them to the unthinking "man of affairs" and is so completely deceptive as to their real character. I say both of them because, believe me or not, dear old Mr. Mellon, while not possessed of the talents and entirely lacking in the taste and training as a precinct politician which Mr. Coolidge enjoys, is just as strongly and partisanly Republican. His politics can be summed up in a single phrase—"Whatever is Republican is right."

But enough of that. Let's talk of more pleasant things—Nick Longworth, for instance, our noble Speaker. I have talked with him personally but once since the election, but my own impression then conceived and since confirmed from various sources is that Mr. Longworth is much more full of himself as a Presidential candidate than he was before the election—and with reason. It is pointed out by leaders in the small but admiring coterie of good fellows—oh, such good fellows—with which—or whom—the Speaker—himself, as his boosters tell you, the Prince of Good Fellows—is surrounded, that if Mr. Coolidge is

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not nominated the Prince of Good Fellows will be. The way they reason is this: Wadsworth and Ogden Mills, both concededly Presidential possibilities a few weeks ago, are today out. "Licked and eliminated" is the way those who hover around the Prince of Good Fellows sweep the two New York lame ducks aside. As to Lowden, he is much too old. As to Dawes, he killed his own chances when he went to sleep last year and is now more or less a joke; as to Hughes and Hoover, not a chance to get the necessary political backing; as to Borah and Kenyon, too radical.

That is the way the admiring coterie deals with the rest of the list. Logically and eloquently they argue that there are in 1928 but two possibilities—Nick and Cal. When they get down that far they then proceed to deal with Cal. The thing that bars Cal, they say, is the third term. If Grant and Roosevelt could not get away with a third term how in the world does anyone seriously expect Coolidge to do it? All this talk about serving his first elective term is pure camouflage which will be easily seen through. The traditional distaste of the American people to give any President more than two terms in the White House is much too deep-seated to combat successfully. The Republican party would risk defeat to attempt it. The risk is too great to run even if anyone of importance in the party really wanted to run it. No, no, Cal is out, they say, and he will when the time comes make it plain that he bows cheerfully to the wise custom that limits the period that one man should occupy the White House to eight years. "That, then," they joyfully exclaim, "leaves nobody but Nick—ain't it great?"

Well, perhaps it would be if it worked out that way, but it won't. It is sad to souse all these happy dreams of the admiring coterie with a lot of cold water—and it would be much better for their peace of mind if by any chance any of them read the New Republic and have got this far, to stop right here, because I am about to express my firm conviction that so far as the Presidency is concerned there isn't a chance for the Prince of Good Fellows. Perhaps that is going too far. There is always a chance, but it is not going too far to say that his chance is darn slim. It is not going too far to say that the Prince is the longest shot of the whole Republican Presidential field. I could give if there were space and time quite a number of very good reasons for this belief of mine. I could, for example, while agreeing to the soundness of some of the eliminations made by the Prince's friends, disagree strongly with some others. I think the soundest argument they make is the one about Calvin and the third term. There is force in that and I doubt myself whether if there were no other reason for dropping Mr. Coolidge overboard the Republican party would quite dare to go into a fight against the third term tradition. But granting that that is true and granting some of the other things, too, the nomination of the Prince of Good Fellows is brought no nearer. The thing that the Prince's enthusiastic touters fail to mention but which any Ohio politician who can be got to talk privately and frankly on the subject will tell you right away, is that there is not the least likelihood that the Prince will be Ohio's favorite son in the next convention. If Ohio has a favorite son his name will be Frank D. Willis, not Nicholas W. Longworth.

More than that—even if Senator Willis does not want the delegation, it is extremely unlikely the Prince could get it. The main reason for that is that the Prince is too wet—too wet personally and too wet politically. He suits Cincinnati, in which his district lies, fine, but the rest of the state not so well. Ohio as a whole is dry, unmistakably and unshakably dry. Ohio has proved its dryness a dozen times in as many years. And the Republican party in Ohio is dryer than the state. It is thoroughly and completely and consistently Anti-Saloon League-ridden. Just a few weeks ago it badly beat a really good but not great man—Mr. Pomerene—because he wasn't dry and his opponent was. The idea that in 1928 the Republican party in this dry state dominated by Anti-Saloon League leaders and Methodist preachers is going to present as its choice for the Presidency the Prince of Good Fellows is not taken very seriously in Ohio. At least that is what Ohio friends who have drifted in here the last week or so tell me. Without the enthusiastic and united support of his home state the Prince of course—or any other candidate—would not have much chance. This little fact seems to have been overlooked by the friends of the Prince. I suspect, however, the Prince knows it.

Washington. T. R. B.

Gozzi and Shaw

Princess Turandot, by Carlo Gozzi, adapted from the Russian version by Henry G. Alsberg and Isaac Don Levine. Provincetown Playhouse, November 12, 1926.

Pygmalion, by Bernard Shaw. Guild Theatre, November 15, 1926.

THE THEATRE GUILD has already to its credit this season the production of a distinguished play in Juarez and Maximilian, to which it has now added an admirable Pygmalion. On the occasion of this Shaw comedy, revived after eleven years, two very interesting discussions arise.

One of these, as was the case also with Candida two seasons ago, is that with their revival and with the passage of time in the theatre, a certain change happens to the two Shaw plays. So true is this that we are led to wonder if the dramatist, busy with making his points, pitting ideas against one another, fighting causes, knocking people and opinions over the head, did not, through the genius of him, create plays that are more human and lasting than he had quite imagined. Pygmalion and Candida both, quite independently of their controversies and causes, have proved to be plays full of moving life, situations fruitful of emotion and character values, stories capable of stirring a profound response, when much of their original thesis and combative source is dimmed, overlooked, out-of-date, or taken for granted. With the exception of Mr. Reginald Mason, who takes the leading part of Professor Higgins, the Guild production of Pygmalion is well acted—in Mr. Henry Travers's Doolittle ideally so—well cast and well directed; but certainly it must be plain that Pygmalion provided an easier encounter than it once did, easier to take in, easier to feel, easier to respond to as a

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section of life. This is partly because of the passage of time over the Shaw combats, once so militant and edged, and partly because of the actors' interpretation.

The part of Professor Higgins, who takes up the flower girl, teaches her to talk like a duchess, passes her in society and forgets meanwhile that she is a human being with feeling, pride and warm impulse, is at best hard enough. The play is, of course, a kind of intellectual farce, with everything pushed to an extravagance in persons, themes and events. But even at that this hero all too readily may seem to be tedious, selfish and unkind. What he is in fact, allowing for all the high farcicality of the piece, is a sort of poet and dreamer—English male to be sure, added to the bargain, British lord of the hearth—a sort of poet and dreamer, abstract, absent, impractical. But he is pure, in the strict sense of that battered word, he is pure through the fact that he is whole in his integrity, his motives are in the same kind as his nature, he has no false or imitative considerations, his desires and impulses are true to themselves, without ulterior or advantageous motives. He wholly exemplifies Balzac's saying that every man of genius has a child in him; a divine child if you like; and it is this in him that makes him, as a child can be, forgetful of others, and this makes Eliza single him out beyond Colonel Pickering and other men more courteous, finished and social. Only in this light is Professor Higgins tolerable, only thus can we see his tenderness and his straight, fantastic integrity.

Mr. Reginald Mason's portrayal of the rôle makes Professor Higgins an ass who is far too arch, too self-conscious and affected, too selfish, too full of pain for the rest of the world and Eliza especially. As acting it is highly self-conscious, obvious and forced, without wit and without anything besides a certain misplaced technical confidence.

Miss Lynn Fontanne's Eliza has much loveliness and pathos and fine streaks of comedy. It subordinates the wit and the contrast of forces that Shaw intended to a character pathos that is beautiful and true, but that limits the scenes and makes them at times indeed quite unduly painful. Compared with the classic Eliza Doolittle of Mrs. Patrick Campbell, Miss Fontanne's performance is more distressing, more believable as a real person, more lovable. Mrs. Campbell's performance was more brilliant and adult, more underscored and keen, and far closer to the mind of Shaw. Such an interpretation as hers preserved much better the balance of the play. It pitted against the abstraction of Professor Higgins, his analyses, his sophistications, his heedless preoccupations and his verbal clarities, the primitive forces in Eliza, her helpless simplicity grounded in strong, eternal instinct and the straightness of her vital intentions. Played as it was first played at the hands of Mrs. Campbell the character and the drama were much more brilliant and as theatre had a more exciting bite and edge. As Miss Fontanne plays, the character and the drama fall more in line with stage tradition; this interpretation brings the piece into more usual and warmer harbors, and gives to it simpler and more general human values, and brings the rôle far more within the capacities of the average actress in the theatre of popular emotion, a theatre not less good, perhaps, but different, nevertheless, from Shaw's.

Turandot

At the Provincetown Playhouse Mr. Leo Bulgakov of the Moscow Art Theatre has directed Princess Turandot, with an eye perhaps on its Russian past—an event that aroused Moscow with its revolutionary tang—but freely brought into American values. Following the spirit of the commedia dell' arte that Gozzi in 1761 was writing for, Mr. Bulgakov sprinkles his performance with American details, allusions to business, bootleggers, conventions and what not, and devises matters so that the players are introduced to us in their proper selves and are later seen putting on their costumes, or properties rather, a sash and sabre over an evening suit, a veil, a hat out of a lampshade, a beard made of a Turkish towel, an ancient's robe out of a slicker and so on. We see the scenery shifted before our eyes, the actors streaming amiably and happily about their affairs and to their appointed places. This is in the spirit of play and the spirit of the comedy theatre. It amuses the actors, and some people in the audience are amused, some are not. I had as lief have it if the company chooses or as lief not. It is at best an element in the theatre that soon exhausts itself, and that, for me at least, after the first few moments takes its place as easily as any more realistic or plausible method of treatment would do, and as easily falls into its just relation to the main parts of the event, which are forever concerned with the reading of the lines, the security of the emotion, the intellectual bent, and the kind of beauty and excitement through which these are seen. From this point of view I found the production far above the average in the theatre. The acting was often fair, its faults were those of beginners rather than the mediocrity and callous sterility so often to be seen—Mr. Jasper Deeter, who essays the Emperor of Peking, was amusing, Madame Barbara Bulgakov and Mr. Kirby Hawkes gave engaging performances. The best and most valuable element in the production as a whole is this: the players are learning to attack the serious and beautiful—however ironical or fantastic it is—with gaiety and pleasure instead of solemnity, which, when misapplied, is one of the blights of the duller bourgeois theatre.

Mr. Robert Van Rosen's settings, in the most modern vein, are unequal; that for the torture chamber very ingenious and glowing.

STARK YOUNG.

Jazz and Folk Art

ABOUT a year ago, in a discussion here of what I called The Comedy of Commerce, I referred to jazz, not in uncomplimentary terms, but critically as an instance of the art of a commerce and industry ridden people. Many readers gave protest. So far as I could see, the chief point against me was that I had dared be critical at all of a folk art. Jazz, went their sentimental plaint, was the expression of a people. (I had not denied it.) Hence, hands off! Hence, down on worshipful knees!

There has indeed been abroad for a full century the curious notion that folk art—as once the King—can do no wrong: that folk art is necessarily good art: that the critic who dares to question folk art commits the unpardonable sin.

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This is a point I would examine briefly, forgetting jazz as the mere pretext for it. The notion, to begin with, seems to be quite modern. Before Rousseau, folk art was known, of course; was appreciated; was indeed taken for granted. It was neither idealized nor despised. It was the art of the folk: the élite regarded it with the same relative eye with which they looked upon the people. The people was the mass, the soil, the loam, whence they had sprung; the body, if you will, for the aristocratic spirit. It was indispensable and it was causally, if not finally, good. No tyrant could think otherwise, without deleting the very substance of his power. Molière, in the first act of Le Misanthrope, expressed the common philosophic attitude toward folk art. To excoriate the precious nonsense of Oronte, Alceste quotes a popular Parisian ditty, and declares it vastly better than the sophisticate's sonnet. He shatters the courtier with a point which today would be altogether lost. For he is uttering a paradox. Here, in our language, is the gist of his attack: "This popular Parisian song—you know its class—may not be much; but it *is* sincere, sweet, lovely. And your sonnet, M. Oronte, which should of course be an improvement on such primitive traits, shows but their total loss."

The crowning of folk art is a corollary from Rousseau who preached a "return to Nature"—as if civilized man were somehow miraculously out of nature; and "a return to infancy"—as if his own doctrines had not been the dream of a weary adult. If you accept the Rousseauistic premise, the modern notion follows about art. The best art, then, will be the least cultured, the most primitive, the most childlike. And poor man, addicted hopelessly to beauty, had best pursue his weakness in the art of folk who, thinking least, are least attainted. If, however, you reject the creed of Rousseau—which does not mean that you deny his value and his genius; if it seems clear to you that civilized man belongs as much to nature as a tree does, and that man's need to live well, to know true, to aim high, is as healthy and as natural a function as the tree's to grow good roots and blossom, then this indiscriminate adoring of folk art, merely because it *is* folk art, is nonsense.

Dante was once ten years old. He was a remarkable child. He babbled sonnets and rondeaus which revealed his nature. Do you put the prattlings he produced at ten before the Divina Commedia he composed at fifty? If you are the usual folk-art worshiper, why not? Were those lyric works of Dante's youth not the pure Dante? the untrammeled sign and substance of his soul? Were they not Dante's folk art? And the Divina Commedia! what alien and sophisticate and unoriginal matters dulled the raptures of his early years to this! Aristotle, Aquinas, Virgil, the Apocalypses of Jerusalem, the Pseud-Epigraphia of Alexandria—the whole theology and logic of the Schoolmen had to "debauch" the pure Dante, ere he was ready to write his intricate, conscious Poem. If you are a real lover of art, surely you will turn with mild disgust from the Commedia to his childhood's singing.

I do not think this caricature of the folk art fad is too unjust to sharpen a just point. It is literally true that if greatness be ever in a man or a race, it must potentially have been there at the outset. Therefore the beginning expressions of that man or race will hold the germ of their significance. Most men, moreover, fail (perhaps most races also) to fulfill their spiritual promise. The promise universally exists. No child, no child-race is without it. Only the achievement is rare. And so it follows that the search for spiritual values among children will be, by and large, more fruitful than among men and women. But to say that the art-expression of all children gives more than the art-expression of all adults, because children all have the germ and adults seldom the flower, —only this bad logic can lead us to conclude that child art and folk art are best, or even always good. Folk art is the seed of great art: seeds are more numerous than flowers. To cultivate the seed at the expense of the flower is a defeatism and a folly we are not yet quite cured of.

But folk art is not naïve in its elements, any more than are the babblings of the "purest" child. It is, more often, the naïve mirroring and mimicry of ideas caught from above. The emotions of folk art are childish. Yet they are the result of unconsciously inherited ideas, imposed by ruling classes. Take for instance the folk arts of mediæval Christian Europe—the spirituals of the American Negro slave. Did the folk invent the intricate theology and philosophy on which they rested? Rather, they vulgarized the product of intellectual minorities—Prophets, Plato, Plotinus and the Patrists: made it a pabulum, at last, which later intellectuals could reëmploy for the creating of more cultivated art. Another example: Russian folk music reveals traces of liturgical and synagogical music. Now, a new group of cultivated artists—Rimsky, Stravinsky, Ornstein—reforms this popularized pabulum of older minorities into a fresh intellectualized music.

Or consider our jazz. Jazz is not so much a folk music —like the spirituals—as a folk accent in music. It expresses well a mass response to our world of piston-rods, cylinders and mechanized laws. The response is of the folk and is passive. The nature of our world itself is due to the work and temperament of minorities alien to the jazz-makers. Jazz expresses a personal maladjustment to this world, righted by sheer and shrewd compliance. And this, doubtless, is why the races at once most flexible and most maladjusted—the Negro and the Jew—give the best jazz-masters. Since the rhythm of our age is not transfigured in jazz, as in truly creative art, but is assimilated, the elements of the age itself which we may disapprove will appear also in jazz. In other words a folk art—being so largely an art of reaction and of assimilation—will contain the faults of the adult minorities that rule the folk, as well as the pristine virtues of the people.

And we have other folk arts. The Rosary—jazzless, European saccharine—is as truly a folk art as any of the Berlin or Gershwin ditties. Harold Bell Wright's books—messes of Victorian notions in decay—are also an American folk art. The New York Daily News is the daily art of a folk numbering several millions.

The adorers of folk art in its own divine right need but observe what they adore. That will be enough to cure them. Nor should they forget that in all culturally early epochs, dissatisfaction with folk art is one of the incentives for the production of great art.

WALDO FRANK.

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Autumn Poems

Simple Autumnal

The measured blood beats out the year's delay.
The tearless eyes and heart forbidden grief,
Watch the burned, restless, but abiding leaf,
The brighter branches arming the bright day.

The cone, the curving fruit should fall away,
The vine-stem crumble, ripe grain know its sheaf.
Bonded to time, fires should have done, be brief,
But, serfs to sleep, they glitter and they stay.

Because not last nor first, grief in its prime
Wakes in the day, and knows of life's intent.
Anguish would break the seal set over time
And bring the baskets where the bough is bent.

Full seasons come, yet filled trees keep the sky,
And never scent the ground where they will lie.

LOUISE BOGAN.

Annihilation

While the blue noon above us arches
And the poplar sheds disconsolate leaves,
Tell me again why love bewitches
And what love gives.

Is it the trembling finger that traces
The eyebrow's curve, the curve of the cheek?
The mouth that quivers, while the hand caresses,
But cannot speak?

No, not these, not in these is hidden
The secret, more than in other things:
Not only the touch of a hand can gladden
Till the blood sings.

It is the leaf that falls between us,
The bell that murmurs, the shadows that move,
The autumnal sunlight that fades upon us,
These things are love.

It is the "No, let us sit here longer,"
The "Wait till tomorrow," the "Once I knew"—
These trifles, said as you touch my finger
And the clock strikes two.

The world is intricate, and we are nothing.
It is the complex world of grass,
The twig on the path, a look of loathing,
Feelings that pass—

These are the secret; and I could hate you
When, as I lean for another kiss,
I see in your eyes that I do not meet you,
And that love is this.

Rock meeting rock can know love better
Than eyes that stare or lips that touch.
All that we know in love is bitter,
And it is not much.

CONRAD AIKEN.

A Letter in Autumn

I saw the worn granite gathering without end
Its frail harvest of foam; I heard the storms upstart;
I thought, only the sea's intransigence and the wind
Companion love's blind tide against the heart.

And because no fury but of wind and water matched
The beating in my breast, and finding no answer but in these,
I lay tonight by the uplifted sea and watched
Where the foam flowered about me like brief trees.

I saw the water blowing like dark fire,
I heard far cries caught in the wind's breath.
They were as old and desolate as my desire:
Love's very ravings at the door of death.

I think no matter what journeys I may go
For love's sake, or whatever peace I find,
The sea will wake in my heart and the wind blow
On autumn nights terribly in my mind.

I think I shall never be startled when summer is dying
Out of my sleep by the rumor of wind and rain
But I shall remember, and hear those voices crying
Amid the waves' loud wilderness again.

GEORGE DILLON.

Twilight in a Tower

Finding the city below me like a flame
In the last sunshine, I said to autumn, "Blow on!
We are building a beautiful spring you cannot claim
In this country of stone."

And seeing so many men march in a thousand ways
The old way of hunger and thirst, I thought,
"They are going somewhere, somewhere their dream is waiting,
Whether they know it or not."

But night came, smelling of far fields, and even
That brave procession moving with purpose and pride
Became like shadows wandering or driven,
And the wind cried;

And the world seemed a world of autumn and wind,
And the city but a frail rustling by the sea
Of men like leaves blown blindly without end
From life's wild flowering tree.

GEORGE DILLON.

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CORRESPONDENCE

Professor Dickinson Replies

SIR: In your issue of October 20 Professor Barnes writes a long comment on my review of his book. Since some of your readers may wish to know whether what he says has shaken my opinion I write a line to say that it has not. The view I take of the particular points he raises will be found in my International Anarchy and I see no reason to modify what is there said. In general, I think—and his letter confirms me in the opinion—that he enormously exaggerates the "guilt" of the Entente and underestimates that of the Central Powers. I think also that the question of relative guilt is not very important, but that it is of urgent importance that the International Anarchy should be dealt with; since otherwise another war will follow, which may well be the end of civilization. That is all I wish to say in your columns. Professor Barnes's book and my own are before the world; and readers who have the desire have also the opportunity to judge between us.

G. LOWES DICKINSON.

Cambridge, England.

The Brotherhood of Pullman Porters

SIR: The Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, the first National Negro labor union in the country, is calling its friends together for a big Labor Dinner, to be held Tuesday, November 30, at the Yorkville Casino, 210 East Eighty-sixth Street, New York, N. Y. In the first fourteen months of its existence, the Brotherhood has succeeded in organizing more than half of the Pullman porters in the United States, thus proving not only that colored workers are organizable but that they are eager to become part of the trade union movement. It is to consider their relation to the general labor movement—to the fight against company unions and to the campaign to organize the unorganized—that the Dinner will be held.

Speakers will be—Samuel Untermyer, James Weldon Johnson, of the National Association for the Advancement of the Colored Race, Eugene Kinckle Jones, of the National Urban League, Hugh Frayne, the Rev. A. Clayton Powell, pastor of the Abyssinian Baptist Church and Robert Levann, editor of the Pittsburgh Courier. Paul Robeson, famous baritone, will sing several songs.

May I invite the readers of the New Republic to be present on this occasion, which I believe will be a memorable one? Reservations may be made at $2 a cover, by writing the Brotherhood at 2311 Seventh Avenue, New York, N. Y.

A. PHILIP RANDOLPH,
General Organizer.

New York, N. Y.

Who May Teach School

SIR: Mr. Mackinnon's letter, May Catholics Teach School, in the October 27 issue caused me to smile at the intensity of his feeling.

It is not that Catholics may not teach school; nobody is wanted who isn't "regular" in his religion. I canvassed the entire country by mail a year or two ago in order to learn the extent of this discrimination. Public education is non-sectarian only in the minds of Chautauqua lecturers and uninformed theologians.

Every teachers' agency in the United States requires its customers to answer the question, "What church do you attend?" or "Church preference."

Wheeling, W. Va., included in its application blank issued by the superintendent the following beautiful dictum: "Give three references as to your ability including the pastor of your church."

Every suburb of cosmopolitan Cleveland wants to know about church affiliation. In fact, Ohio superintendents appear to be more interested in a teacher's religious faith than in her ability to teach. Mr. Mackinnon of Athens, Ohio, should have discovered that a long time ago.

New York state prohibits by a regents' ruling any inquiry into a teacher's religion. The ruling amounts to little or nothing outside of the larger cities. Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, New Jersey and Utah do not permit religious tests for teachers. I know nothing about Utah, but I have plenty of evidence to show that legislation against the religious test in the foregoing eastern states is worse than useless. In Massachusetts, I was informed by a leading agency, it has increased discrimination.

If Mr. Mackinnon is anxious to remedy matters, he might try to secure the passage of legislation in Ohio prohibiting the religious test, although Article 1, Section 7 declares that "No religious test shall be required, as a qualification for office, nor shall any person be incompetent to be a witness on account of his religious belief," and should cover the situation. Similar constitutional provisions in other states have been held to prohibit discrimination against teachers. However, the rulings are ignored.

From the standpoint of the average board of education, all but Methodists, Presbyterians and Baptists are "funny." And funny folks, Mr. Mackinnon must realize, cannot know anything.

DAVID H. PIERCE.

Cleveland, Ohio.

A Puzzle for the Boy

SIR: I have a boy aged twelve. In his bedroom are several pictures with interpretative verses furnished by the American Humane Education Society. One of such pictures is of a boy of his own age looking at a squirrel and a bird in a tree. Below are these lines:

I've put away my traps and gun
For killing is such cruel "fun"
My camera is fun for three,
The squirrel and the bird and me.

He attends the state school and brings home for recitation next day an effort at versification in which the following lines appear:

Ere yet the life blood, warm and wet,
Has dimmed the glistening bayonet,
Each soldier eye shall brightly turn
Where thy sky-born glories burn,
And as his springing steps advance
Catch war and vengeance from the glance,
And when the cannon's mouthings loud
Heave in wild wreaths the battle shroud
And gory sabres rise and fall
* * * * * * * * * *
That lovely messenger of death.

How is the boy to decide which is right?

A FATHER.

San Francisco, Cal.

Debs and Wilson

SIR: Because of my knowledge of the facts, I am impelled to reply to your statement in the issue of November 3 that "refusal to pardon him [Debs] must forever remain a blot on the memory of Woodrow Wilson."

Eugene Debs said, while he was still in the Federal Prison, to a messenger from the administration, that he would accept no pardon from Woodrow Wilson. And none was offered him.

ELIZABETH BASS.

Chicago, Ill.

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Eight Years with Wilson

Eight Years with Wilson's Cabinet, 1913-1920. With a Personal Estimate of the President. By David Houston. New York: Doubleday, Page and Company. Two vols. 729 pages. $10.

THE publishers of Houston's memoirs allege that they contain much startling information about what happened in Washington during the Wilson administration. Nothing could well be more preposterous. If Mr. Houston actually knows more than any living man about what really went on in Washington he has succeeded admirably in keeping his information to himself. Not only are the volumes devoid of anything very startling, but they are padded with quotations from Wilson's public utterances, unimportant letters to and by Houston and even by long quotations from easily available books. The larger half of the second volume is taken up by a long Estimate of Wilson that reiterates the view implicit in the main body of the work and a series of reprints of speeches made by Houston during political campaigns and of pamphlets written during the War for the Creel Bureau. A just if harsh judgment of these two imposing volumes is that they contain a dearth of relevant important information and a plethora of barren words. They do contain passages that confirm and substantiate judgments of events already commonly held, and they are important as indicating trends of opinion that dominated the government at critical periods. The volumes, then, are more important for the flashes of light they give than for the flood of light they are alleged to give. And they seem to me important only to those already extensively acquainted with the general situation at Washington during the war years.

No single track explanation of the entrance of the United States into the World War will ever be acceptable. It does seem reasonable to say that one factor that must weigh heavily in anyone's consideration of the problem is that of Anglomania. This trend of mind usually found expression not only in a subservience to England, but in a thorough-going support of the Allied cause. The case of Walter Hines Page has already been studied and reported on at length. Careful reviewers of the Intimate Papers of Colonel House noted how his judgment became hopelessly biased in favor of the Allies long before our actual entrance into the War. The Anglomania of Franklin K. Lane, and his hostility toward Wilson when the latter was maintaining his more or less objective view of the European struggle, has long been a matter of common property. Roosevelt after the first few months was extremely pro-Ally. E. A. Alderman, President of the University of Virginia, a friend of Houston, Page and Wilson, wrote Houston on March 22, 1917: "Personally, of course, I have never drawn a neutral breath since August 1, 1914." Of Chief Justice White, Houston writes: "Shortly after England entered the War, he came up to me one evening at a social gathering, put his hand on my shoulder, and said in a low voice: 'I wish I were thirty years younger. I would go to Canada and volunteer.'" American financiers were strongly pro-Ally. So were the majority of the powerful newspapers. The masses of the people, particularly in the West and South, were largely lethargic. They did not have decided opinions in any direction. Houston noted this condition in his travels. Not even the Lusitania sinking stirred them.

For a long time it has been asserted that David Houston added his bit to the pro-Ally sentiment in the government, and consequently his bit toward destroying the early objectivity of President Wilson. No one has accused Wilson of being utterly and blindly pro-English or pro-Ally at any period prior to November, 1916. It has been noted, however, that the composition of his mind and his training tended toward that state of mind. And it must be recognized that constant pressure from associates eventually destroys the objectivity of even the strongest man. Consequently the vast amount of pressure on Wilson, all pro-Ally in composition, eventually brought him around to that standpoint as well. Page, House, Houston were all personal influences that tended to that end. Houston has now provided the material to justify the accusation of pro-Ally bias made against him. A few citations are relevant. All of them have reference to the period before our entrance into the War.

> Certainly the Allies are in the right—that is, Great Britain, France and Belgium are. I have been on their side since the first day the Germans moved. . . . I wanted to see Germany vanquished. I wanted to see terms forced upon the Central Powers by the Allies. . . . Granting that the Allies have violated law and are not free from selfishness, normally, essentially they stand for law and order. I am for asserting our rights [against Germany!] for doing our part for our sake and for humanity. [Essentially the attitude of House. Page was much more extreme.] . . . I anxiously watched every step with utter sympathy for the Allies.

But that Houston was not alone in thinking along these lines has already been indicated. In addition to the individuals and organizations cited it appears that the Cabinet generally very early violated the spirit and letter of Wilson's neutrality proclamation. Indeed but two figures stood against the general drift, Bryan and Lansing, and Lansing later got killed in the rush. Page's complaints about the intolerably legalistic and unimaginative correspondence that Lansing carried on with the English are already familiar. Both points are also made against Lansing by Houston. It indeed took a powerful imagination to dissipate the significance of the Allied violations of international law and our neutrality to such an extent that far from sternly calling them to book we joined their cause.

Far be it from me to praise Mr. Bryan in general, but his views in particulars were marvellously right. He was certainly right in his attitude toward England. The question of the English violations of our neutrality has never been thoroughly canvassed, but those writers who have looked into the matter all agree that England did more to destroy the fabric of international law than Germany. So moderate a man as Maurice Parmelee tends to that point of view in his Blockade and Sea Power. Giving over her traditional position as defender of neutral rights the United States subserved herself to Allied necessities, and refused to recognize German necessities, even though Germany showed an almost absolute willingness to adhere to established codes. (For example, she agreed to observe the Declaration of London while the Allies refused.) Lansing, arguing from the legal standpoint, and Bryan for some reason not fathomable by me, sought to call England to book. The "one member" of this passage is obviously Bryan:

> One member wanted to know what we were going to do about England's interference with our trade.

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> He wanted a strong note sent to her protesting against her illegal action in holding up our exports, particularly our cotton. There was instant objection to such a course from several members of the Cabinet. They strongly resisted the proposal that our material interests be considered at the same moment when we were discussing a grave matter involving human lives. . . . Bryan got excited. He said that he had all along insisted on a note to England; that she was illegally preventing our exports from going where we had a right to send them; and that the Cabinet seemed to be pro-Ally. All the rest of the Cabinet strongly protested against a note to England, and no note was sent. The President sharply rebuked Bryan, saying that his remarks were unfair and unjust.

Bryan, of course, resigned shortly after this episode, and pro-Allied sentiment ruled unopposed.

Houston gives us no new light on our entrance into the War. He simply amplifies our information about the forces that made it inevitable. No more does he cast any new light on the Peace Conference. Indeed it is difficult to say just what he does tell us that is either new or important. Certainly the anecdotes he retails are not of any great importance. The volumes are merely another apology for Wilson and material for footnotes to the history of an immensely important period.

C. Hartley Grattan.

Edison

Edison, the Man and His Work, by George S. Bryan. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 350 pages. $4.

AFTER hearing, ever since one was old enough to hear, the rising chorus about the wizard of Menlo Park, about his living on an apple and sleeping two hours, about his questionnaire for college men, his perennial deafness and perennial birthdays, his endless discoveries, his unofficial election to the post of Most Useful American, one longs to find, in Mr. Bryan's excellent and readable book, some fly in the Edison ointment. But there isn't any. He simply is an astounding figure, a great man, a fantastically productive man, a credit to civilization, to the state of New Jersey, to the planet and to himself.

I like better the earlier pages of this book, from which Edison emerges a most curious and sympathetic figure, than the later, where he is rather buried under the multiple weight of his achievements, a little bewildering to an untechnical mind. I like particularly the first experiment he ever made, although fruitless. Edison had noticed the sitting of geese upon their eggs, followed invariably by a crop of goslings. One day he disappeared. "After lengthy search, he was discovered in the barn, sitting on a collection of hen's eggs and goose eggs that he seemed to be hopeful of hatching." I am sorry that, like too many others in history, he had only a few months' formal education, in the course of which his teacher reported him as "addled." He redeemed himself to some extent from this commonplace by building a fire in somebody's barn, just for fun, and by testing a theory that gases might enable a person to fly, through the medium of a small friend, whom he induced to swallow a large quantity of Seidlitz powders. One of these days I should like to read the biography of a man who as a child did just such things as these, who, like Edison, kept on a shelf two hundred bottles all labeled POISON, who burnt barns, tested theories, sat on eggs, was considered a nut, a dreamer, an addle-pate, and who in fact turned out so to be, dying at seventy-eight, a pleasant nobody behind a grocery counter.

But Edison, as soon in the game as page eleven, seems certain to succeed. He is a boy after Alger's heart in the energy of his strides forward—with this difference, that what he did sounds like Edison and like no other boy. Here he is at fifteen selling papers on a small branch railway in Michigan. He installs himself in an unused smoker's compartment, and for months alternates, in this small, rocking space, between selling his popcorn and magazines, fussing with qualitative chemistry, and getting out a small weekly paper. As early as this there are traits which promise a fertile business sense as much as an inventor's: in order to sell more papers, Edison would jump off the train some distance from the station, on to a pile of sand which he had carefully dumped at the precise spot for the purpose.

The next step forward was telegraphy, which had a skilled, an honorable, a fascinating place in the life of those times which entice from Mr. Bryan what are perhaps his best chapters. Edison, of course, was an extraordinarily expert performer on the key, and a no less notable receiver, taking down, in a fine vertical hand especially studied with a view to speed and accuracy, yards and yards of press copy without a slip. Regularly, even now, the nobility of that craft are in convention assembled, with Edison the honored head of all. I like the picture of these gatherings, so unlike other American conventions: every man has by his place at table a sending and a receiving set, which by custom are the only means of communication among them. The after-dinner speaker rises, to utter, instead of toothless vacuities, a pithy click, click-click. Click-click, click, click-click again, and there is laughter and applause. (Rotarians please copy.)

The story from the point when Edison took out the first of his 1,328 patents (for a vote-recorder), and when, not long after, he received his first check (forty thousand dollars) for another invention, draws gradually away from him, and we see him through a thicker haze of ceaseless activity. Part of his success (phenomenal brains and industry aside) must undoubtedly be ascribed to his coincidence with the very beginnings of electrical engineering, to the pioneering in which he was wonderfully adapted. Now that every one of us switches on and off that mysterious current a dozen times a day, without much thought as to what it is, it is a little difficult to recapture the glamor of those gas-lit days, and their characteristic explanation of how the juice worked: "if you had a vastly elongated dachshund" (said an old Scotch line repairer), "long enough to reach from Edinburgh to London, he would bark in London if you pulled his tail in Edinburgh." This was plausible, but, adds Mr. Bryan, "Edison admitted that he never understood what went through the dog." He never, it would be fair to say, tried to understand, he remained the pioneer exploiter, adapter and manufacturer, and his vast familiarity with apparent mysteries sprang from an almost wholly practical, and very feebly scientific interest. To this last, of course, he never pretended; it was not in his make-up. Nor was he always—this is true of most inventors—a wholly original inventor. One is struck, in reading this account of him, by the number of devices and necessities of which other men had caught a faltering but magnificent glimpse, glimpses which he, with gigantic patience and ingenuity, hammered into everyday conveniences. The phonograph is a notable exception: stumbling upon it almost by accident, inventing

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it in the strict sense of the word, he developed it into a curiosity with some restricted use in business. Not for years did this languishing find expand into ubiquitous music.

Edison prospered among inventors and towers mile-high above them through a combination of divining-rod instinct with inhuman powers of perseverance. When he was trying to find a usable filament for electric light bulbs (Sir Humphry Davy had produced electric light in the beginning of the nineteenth century), he began by taking laboratory notes which eventually filled 40,000 pages, he sent men to Cuba, Brazil, Ceylon, Japan hunting for just the right fibre, he experimented with 6,000 species of plants, chiefly bamboo, he spent $100,000, he caused current to be passed through everything he could lay his hands on, from punk, celluloid, fishline, cork, to red hairs from the beard of J. V. Mackenzie, who was his guest at the time. His labors toward perfecting storage batteries involved 50,000 experiments. "Secrets," declared one of his assistants, "have to be long-winded and roost high if they want to get away when the 'Old Man' goes hunting for them." And to those who complained that so few of the 50,000 experiments had brought results Edison replied with a smile: "Results! Why, man, I have gotten a lot of results. I know several thousand things that won't work."

He himself was not one of them. The legend of his two or three hours' ration of sleep is largely true. When he was keenly interested, food, sleep and all the exterior world shrank to almost nothing. Many were the stretches of continuous work, thirty hours, sixty hours long, which Edison forced sleepy assistants to share with him. Unfortunately they did not share his ability to lie down on a table for a few moments of forgetfulness. Nor his deep concentration on stillness, when stillness was the order of the day. "Once, inside Sandy Hook, he fished without a bite for two days and two nights and then quit only because the other members of the party compelled him to." I like also, among Mr. Bryan's not too juicy comment on what is commonly known as the "personal aspect," his picture of Edison eternally reciting "There was a little girl who had a little curl" by way of demonstration, into his reproducing talking-machine, and his method of overcoming his deafness when listening to its modern descendant: "Ordinarily I merely place my head against a phonograph. But if there is some faint sound that I don't quite catch this way, I bite into the wood, and then I get it good and strong." And while I am chagrined at Edison's resemblance to other great men in his fondness for detective thrillers, there is something characteristic in his remarks on Shakespeare: "But ah, Shakespeare! That's where you get the ideas! My, but that man did have ideas! He would have been an inventor, a wonderful inventor, if he had turned his mind to it. He seemed to see the inside of everything . . . "

A benefactor, of course, as benefactors go in an age of exterior comfort and convenience; a singular and not wholly typical figure in the Hall of Success, a wonderful human mechanism himself, but perhaps chiefly to be admired as that—as an embodiment of how exciting work can be in a century when so much work is a bore, an example of how much fun life can be to those gifted with that invincible capacity for sheer exploring effort. A noble specimen in the human museum, without considering the material useful by-products: a man who has used all that there was of workable material, of dirigible fire within himself, and has attracted, like a magnet, strength and capacity to himself, which were seemingly beyond him.

ROBERT LITTELL.

Indian Summer

Dark of the Moon, by Sara Teasdale. New York: The Macmillan Company. 92 pages. $1.50.

ALTHOUGH Miss Teasdale has waited six years to publish this collection of her lyrics, most of the poems that have found their way into it have a familiar aspect. One has met them before—in anthologies, in the shape of musical colophons to magazine stories. One has met, if not themselves, then their blood-kin, on the pages of Miss Teasdale's previous books. Reading the volume through is like looking at a portrait in sepia of a woman remembered as flushed with wistful youth. It is the same person and yet not the same. Time has shadowed her eagerness, curtained her eyes, filled her quick hands with quietness, given her a dark serenity in exchange for her bright young agonies. The contours of the face are the same. But the head is bent, not lifted, the dress is more sober, and the lips that were parted in desire are shut in a line of resignation.

The measure of the difference between the younger and the older woman may be gauged by the difference between the poem Arcturus which appeared in her last book and the poem Arcturus in Autumn which appears in the present volume. The first runs thus:

> Arcturus brings the spring back
> As surely now as when
> He rose on eastern islands
> For Grecian girls and men;
>
> The twilight is as clear a blue,
> The star as shaken and as bright,
> And the same thought he gave to them
> He gives to me tonight.

The second, more recent poem, has a slower beat, a mild-voiced bitterness lacking in the other:

> When, in the gold October dusk, I saw you near to setting,
> Arcturus, bringer of spring,
> Lord of the summer nights, leaving us now in autumn,
> Having no pity on our withering;
>
> Oh, then I knew at last that my own autumn was upon me,
> I felt it in my blood,
> Restless as dwindling streams that still remember
> The music of their flood.
>
> There in the thickening dark a wind-bent tree above me
> Loosed its last leaves in flight—
> I saw you sink and vanish, pitiless Arcturus,
> You will not stay to share our lengthening night.

This note of defeat—this shrinking yet dignified attendance upon intimations of mortality—was present even in the earlier book. But there it alternated with lighter moods; here it is the burden of nearly all the songs. On every page one reads the sorrowful wisdom which the years give in return for all they take. In the old days the poet, walking in fear of death, armored herself in song like the pure of heart in the leonine woods. Now she seems willing to put off even that hard and glimmering coat:

> If I should make no poems any more
> There would be rest at least, so let it be;

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Time to read books in other tongues and listen
To the long mellow thunder of the sea.

The year will turn for me, I shall delight in
All animals, and some of my own kind,
Sharing with no one but myself the frosty
And half ironic musings of my mind.

She is no longer frightened by the dark. Silence whines vainly at the door of her spirit, who is "self-complete as a flower or a stone."

Yet it is no gusty autumn that blows through the book. One is aware, rather, of Indian summer, the mellowness of whose sun is itself a foreboding of winter. The poet has drawn in upon herself, where the sounds of the world grow small and shrill, and the ache of the personal is endured without show.

Technically, the book offers little that is new. For the most part Miss Teasdale employs the tersely melodious quatrain which she has made peculiarly her own. There are a few sonnets, and one or two interesting experiments with delayed rhymes, as in Day's Ending and The Flight. The tempo is slower throughout than that to which she has accustomed us, to fit the more sombre thought. But the clear melody, the reverberant simplicity of statement are the same. Always Miss Teasdale has written songs. In other years they were songs which called for a Schumann. Now they demand the musicianship of Brahms.

BABETTE DEUTSCH.

Art, Modern and Primitive

Evolution in Modern Art: A Study of Modern Painting, 1870-1925, by Frank Rutter. New York: Lincoln MacVeagh. The Dial Press. 166 pages; illustrated. $2.

THIS is the latest of a series of diverse but sympathetic interpretations of the modern movement in art. It is written in the style which all except a tight handful of English critics follow: it is chatty and it is spiced with personal reminiscence and it pays far more attention to insular celebrities than the subject itself warrants. Because of its intelligibility and its usually just attitude toward modern art, one would be tempted to recommend it; for it is neither as loftily cocky as Mr. Clive Bell nor as esoteric as Miss Katherine Dreier nor as copiously affirmative as Mr. Sheldon Cheney: unfortunately for Mr. Rutter his task has been accomplished with far more point, skill and depth in Mr. Walter Pach's The Masters of Modern Art; and until someone will more compendiously treat modern art as a whole and include Russia, Germany and Austria, as well as France and England, no book that merely gleans over the field where Mr. Pach has so thoroughly garnered will seem worth more than a passing glance.

Primitive Negro Sculpture, by Paul Guillaume and Thomas Munro; with 41 illustrations from the collections of the Barnes Foundation. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. 134 pages. $6.

THIS study of primitive Negro sculpture is a concise and able contribution to the understanding of an art whose conventions were completely remote from our western consciousness, until by an effort of intuition a group of modern artists discovered their æsthetic value and their special relevance to our own day and art. The introductory text shows the relation of this sculpture to Negro life, discusses its æsthetic qualities, and discriminates between the chief traditions; this part of the study, together with the illustrations, is admirably done. I cannot be quite as free in praise of the analysis that accompanies the illustrations: it is like the musical commentaries that are appended to a symphony concert program, and it bears the same relation to æsthetic criticism as a grammatical dissection does to the appreciation of Shakespeare's sonnets. When this sort of criticism gets the upper hand, one uncharitably suspects that there is nothing behind the grammatical structure to talk about; and except in one or two cases in this collection, that is not true. As an example of the current extension of æsthetic sympathies, arising out of worldwide communication, Negro sculpture is historically significant; as a means of helping the western artist to step outside the dead convention of literalism and superficial representation, and, as the authors say, to afford a compromise between representation and design, this primitive art is æsthetically significant. It will also, no doubt, be of interest to those who are interested in the contemporary renaissance of the Negro, and to some it will speak with an even deeper voice, with the very beat of the stark, humid, vegetal life of the Gold Coast or the Congo: for these happy persons Negro art will not merely be a contribution to æsthetic form, but an extension of consciousness. Messrs. Guillaume and Munro's study will satisfy every group but the last; and the authors would no doubt justly say that such matters do not lie within their province or competence.

LEWIS MUMFORD.

Recent Fiction

The Cubical City, by Janet Flanner. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. $2.

THE CUBICAL CITY is New York, which like all capitals shows a living face. "Paris had an old girl's countenance, shaded by a trollop's gay wig. London offered the gray phiz of a sour judge, fed on silence, dignity and bad puddings. But here by the Atlantic was a promising Pantagruel, dissipated before he had learned to shave." From these remarks it will be gathered that Miss Flanner dresses her story very smartly indeed. Her power lies chiefly in her sensitiveness to the confused phenomena of modern life, and in her ability to discriminate sharply her impressions. As for the story of Delia, a conquering yellow girl from Ohio, and her lovers, Miss Flanner will do so much better next time that it is not worth dwelling upon. Delia and her impresario Goldstein give the effect of careful portraiture; Paul, the juvenile lead, and Nancy, the confidante, are pale sketches, the latter, indeed, half rubbed out. With all its unevenness, however, The Cubical City is a novel to be remembered for its reflection of the strident tone of New York today. The background is Miss Flanner's best character.

Goodbye, Stranger, by Stella Benson. New York: The Macmillan Company. $2.50.

GOODBYE, STRANGER is likewise a novel of superficial smartness, for which the setting in a Chinese provincial city gives ample suggestion. At first sight the figures are whimsical humors, tilted toward each other at unconventional angles, seen against a background that is fantastically absurd. Little by little, however, one becomes conscious of recurrent themes which reveal a feeling

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HARPERS Magazine Is Giving its Readers for Christmas a New Serial by

Christopher Morley

"PLEASED TO MEET YOU"

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THE NO-GOOD COASTER: A Story
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for life in its essence, themes to which Miss Benson's rather cryptic verse supplies a sort of obligato. Miss Benson is very finished, very polished in her irony. Here speaks Daley, the American wife.

> Think of all the inspiring messages flying about in the air of America—all the deep helpful thoughts about theosophy and the message of the Great War to future generations and psychoanalysis and Rabindranath Tagore and how one can bring the spirit of Jesus into business. I think it's just fine that deep constructive thinking should be so popular—the favorite indoor sport of a great country like America.

You think Daley a fool? You were never more mistaken in your life. Let her finish.

> Not *me*, of course. . . . I've lost the knack of high helpful thinking. I think about insects and dogs and what it would feel like to be a queen . . . or a dipsomaniac . . . or a sea-anemone when a big wave's coming.

The Spite of Heaven, by Oliver Onions. George H. Doran Company. $2.50.

IT is a long time since Oliver Onions ranged himself among the more promising of the younger writers of English fiction, with his trilogy, now entitled Whom God Hath Sundered. It will seem even longer to readers of The Spite of Heaven—or farther, all the way from Mr. Beresford to Michael Arlen. The present book, however, calls attention to rifts and lapses in his earlier work, and explains why Oliver Onions has not redeemed his promise. He lacks the classical quality of bringing his material to the support of his theme. Nor is the lack of unity of form made good by unity of tone or atmosphere. Arbitrary in structure and crude in coloring, The Spite of Heaven has no scintilla of the irony suggested by the title. It is merely the spite of Mr. Oliver Onions.

Iowa Interiors, by Ruth Suckow. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. $2.

IN a sense, Miss Suckow scarcely writes fiction. Her short stories, like her longer ones, present the facts of life with the utmost economy of emphasis. Her art is entirely one of selection, not of transmutation. And her selection of material is confined largely to the sadder aspects of life among her Iowa farmers. The pioneer novel, based on the theme of the growth of the soil, has had a great vogue in America in the last few years. Miss Suckow presents the opposite side of the picture—an older generation, exhausted by fierce toil and lapsing into helplessness, and those members of the younger one who through their weakness or goodness are marked for sacrifice by the pack. Miss Suckow's work will seem to some readers to lack interest and significance; they can hardly deny its human appeal.

The Comedians, by Louis Couperus. New York: George H. Doran Company. $2.50.

AN historical novel in the new style, with scholarship supplying the stuff of Roman life in the first century; and a modern imagination, the motives and behavior by which the characters live. A sense of tragedy broods over the successive periods of imperial Rome. Pater recalls it in his incomparable picture of Roman aristocratic culture under the grave, placable rule of the Antonines. Couperus has caught it in the more hectic epoch when Domitian, mad with crime and fear, hid himself in his palace. The main story follows the career of the troupe of Lavinius Gabinius from their arrival at a low tavern in the Suburia to their triumph in the great theatre of Pompeius at the feast of the Megalesia where the twin "matron-boys," Cecilius and Cecilianus, play the girl parts in the Menæchmi of Plautus. The description of a Roman theatrical performance is one of the great ensemble pieces of the modern classical revival, for grandiose effect ranking with the circus scenes in The Last Days of Pompeii and Ben Hur—and doubtless more accurate than either. But scholarship never wrote great fiction. Fortunately, Couperus in research has not forgotten his craftsmanship.

Joanna Godden Married, by Sheila Kaye-Smith. New York: Harper and Brothers. $2.

MISS KAYE-SMITH has attempted the rarely successful feat of capitalizing an earlier literary success by a sequel. Joanna Godden is one of the best of recent peasant novels in English. For those who have read it, its sequel shines at best with a pale reflected light, and for those who have not, it scarcely shines at all. The short stories which fill out the volume are rather tame and spiritless. They have in theme, though not in style, at times a faint note of irony which reminds one not unpleasantly of Miss Kaye-Smith's often asserted obligation to Hardy.

Mezzanine, by E. F. Benson. New York: George H. Doran Company. $2.

MEZZANINE is Mr. Benson's translation of nel mezzo del camina. It is at that crucial point in life's pathway that Elizabeth Langden is summoned to the journey through hell which is inevitable to the woman of forty-eight who loves in flesh and spirit a husband still youthful and desirable. The novel is described as "a brilliant and spirited social romance." Quite the contrary. There is no brilliant social background in the novel; the characters are isolated with their problem, which is worked out with painfully exact psychological detail. A construction slow in building, but solid. Mr. Benson has completely emancipated himself from Dodo. R. M. L.

Contributors

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ELIZABETH SHEPLEY SERGEANT'S article in this issue will form a part of a book entitled Fire Under the Andes, to be published by Knopf in February.

RAYMOND HOLDEN has published a volume of verse, Granite and Alabaster.

LOUISE BOGAN is the author of Body of This Death, a book of poetry.

CONRAD AIKEN has written several volumes of poems, among them being Priapus and the Pool, and Punch: the Immortal Liar.

GEORGE DILLON is an associate editor of Poetry, a magazine of verse.

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BABETTE DEUTSCH is the author of two volumes of poems, Banners and Honey Out of the Rock, and of a recent novel, A Brittle Heaven.

LEWIS MUMFORD, critic of American life and letters, is the author of The Story of Utopias, and Sticks and Stones. His latest book is The Golden Day.

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